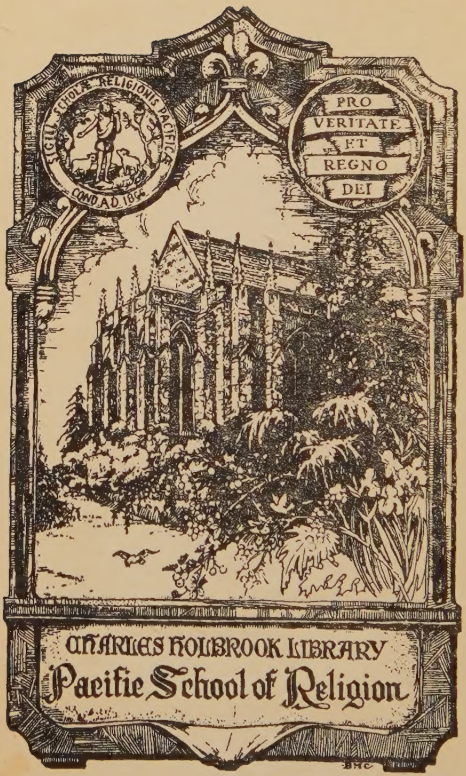
IN AN EASTERN ROSE GARDEN



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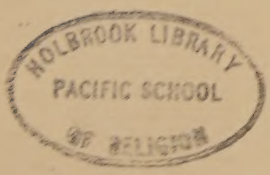

Inayat Khan, 1882-1927

IN AN EASTERN ROSE GARDEN

("VOICE OF INAYAT" SERIES)

A SERIES OF WORD PICTURES RELATING TO THE RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF LOVE, HARMONY AND BEAUTY.

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The subject-matter of this book consists of verbatim reports of extempore discourses given by Murshid Inayat Khan at different times during **1918, 1919,** *and* **1920.** *The version, as it appears, is approved and authorised by him.*

THIS VOLUME
IS DEDICATED
TO ALL FRIENDS OF THE SUFI ORDER,
TO ALL WHO SEEK GUIDANCE, SOLACE, AND ENCOURAGEMENT AMID THE CROSSES OF DAILY LIFE,
AND TO ALL WHO, MOVED BY THE DIVINE SPIRIT, FIND THEMSELVES IRRESISTIBLY DRAWN TO THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE EVER-PRESENT
LOVER OF MEN.

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PROLOGUE.

Once a lover and a beloved were walking through that great garden, the Garden of Allah. Although all creatures receive a portion wherein to stay and to cultivate the fruits that please each best, it so happened that these two wanderers had left their appointed portions and almost unintentionally found themselves together gazing upon the flowers that were growing now here, now there. Perceiving the delight which the flowers in a certain garden, namely the Garden of Inayat, inspired into the beloved, the lover lingered to gather a nosegay to take back to her garden.

Then, in the process of time, the Gardener returned and found the nosegay which the lover had taken still rich in perfumes and so tenderly cared for. So he added much to it, and imparted a magic power to the flowers. For from that time on it became possible to scatter them far and wide without the nosegay becoming smaller, and its varied perfumes became richer and ever richer as the power grew.

Thus was the wandering of the lover and his beloved justified, for the fragrance of the Persian Garden was to be wafted into the Garden of the Lord, and freshen its too sombre hues, and make the one great Truth sparkle above the most brilliant gems.

Love, Harmony and Beauty.

HOW the words "Love, Harmony and Beauty" delight the heart of everyone who hears them! One might wonder what it can be in these words that should be able to exert such a natural power upon the human soul.

The answer is that if there is anything in life which appeals to the human soul, it is love and beauty. Do you ask, "And what besides this?" then the answer is "Besides this, there is nothing else!" Why is this? It is because it is the very nature of life. Love is the nature of life, Beauty is the outcome of life, Harmony is the means by which life accomplishes its purpose. The lack of it results in destruction in life.

When we reflect upon this whole creation we cannot but see that its purpose is to express an ideal of love, harmony, and beauty. Love could not have manifested itself if there were nothing to love, eyes could not have seen if there were nothing to see. What could love have done if there were no beauty? The love would have been silent. Love can only be said to exist after it has passed from silence into expression.

Now comes the question, "What has made beauty?" The answer is that it is love that has made beauty. When a Sufi calls you 'Beloved ones of God' he has this idea in his mind. Whatever God has created, he has created out of His love; He has created for Him to love, and therefore whatever He has created and all His creatures are His beloved ones.

We human beings have our prejudices; we like one, dislike another; we consider one worthy of high estimation, another only worthy of low esteem, but to God they are all alike; they are His creation. It is just as it would be for a poet to have the little scrap of paper

on which his song was written thrown away or lost and disesteemed. How could he sing without his voice? So it is with the Creator, He cannot be pleased for His little scraps of paper to be disesteemed.

God is love, and He has created man out of His love, How then can He be pleased if you have a hatred or prejudice against a fellow-man through forgetting that however unworthy he may seem to be, he is nevertheless the beloved one of God! He has created Him to love Him! Therefore God the Father and Mother of all beings is equally pleased with all his creatures.

But is not one thing more beautiful than another, one object than another, one person more than another either in external or in internal being? What is the reason of this?

The reason is found when we consider the work of an artist, of a poet, of a composer of music, of the writer of a paragraph. We can see that one composition is much more beautiful than another. One picture may perhaps be the best the artist has painted in all his life. The poet may wonder "Have I written this verse; where can it have come from, it is so superior to all others? it is marvellous how these words came to me."

Just as we see it in the individual, so also do we see it in the work of the Creator. At the same time, love is the only power that has created or that can create.

In this way God becomes the lover and the manifestation or object of love at the same time. In the Sanscrit language it is called by mystics Shiva and Shakti, or Purucha and Prakriti, or Ishwara and Maya—these three pairs of words! The one part is love, and the other part is beauty. Love has created the beauty in order that it may be able to love. God is love; that is why He is called the Creator. The lover alone has the power to create, and that which He creates is for the purpose of receiving His love. In the Koran it says, 'God is beautiful, and He *loves* Beauty!'

Now the word 'beautiful' does not refer to the *form*

of God. God is formless. He has no personality until He manifests Himself to Himself. Therefore it is not His personality which is beautiful for God is beyond that which in the ordinary sense of the word is called personality.

What, then, is the source of the beauty? God is beautiful because He has created beauty. If there were no beauty in God, there could have been none in His manifestation. If there were no beauty in the thought of the poet, he could not write beautiful verse; if there were no beauty in the thought of the artist, he could never have painted the picture. One cannot see the beauty in the heart of the painter except in the beauty of the picture he has made. It is not alone the picture which is beautiful, it is the heart of the painter that is beautiful first. Consequently we become able to see the beauty not only in manifestation but also before it was manifested; and before it was manifested it existed in love! In other words, we can see that the beauty was hidden in love; beauty *is* hidden in love, and the beauty that love has before it to love is its own beauty. Therefore to whatever extent beauty is beautiful so is love beautiful; nay, even more so, because the Creator is more beautiful than the thing He has created.

All things that we make are the work of our hands. We are their creator. We are greater than our hands. So it is with love. Love is greater than beauty because love is the creator of the beauty that love loves in its life.

Of course by loving, love becomes limited,—limited as beauty—but then that is the purpose of love. If there were no beauty, His love could not have realised the latent joy of its own nature. The joy of its existence would die out.

As soon as we can think in this way, we come to see that the lover is vaster, incomparably vaster than the object he loves. The real love, the real beauty, is in the lover. The object that he loves is much smaller,

although for the moment the beloved is not aware of the difference.

"You are the object before which I bow. You are the object of which I think day and night, before which I am helpless. You are the object whom I admire, whom I adore," so thinks the lover. Yet he does not realise the vastness of his love, and indeed, strictly speaking, love is vaster than the lover.

When people begin to learn the lesson of love they are apt to become frightened of the pains and difficulties and troubles which they will have to meet on behalf of love. When they compare their condition with that of the beloved they think the beloved is much better off than they. "The one who takes my thought, who gives me pain, who wounds my heart, is much happier. When I compare myself with the beloved I think he is much the happier." And he goes on to think "If I were the beloved it would be much better. Every soul experiences that thought, but once he has risen beyond it, then he begins to know love. The soul that has not escaped from this fails to realise the fulness of love. There is another side to love and that is selfishness, and he must escape from this. The true lover says "I will give everything, I will endure all things, all tortures, all torments that may have to be faced in life. I will bow in humility before whatever befalls me. I will give all that I have. I will bear all things, believe all things, hope for all things, and endure all things." But the other side of love says, "are you crazy? Have you lost your sense? You are foolish. Why this complaining? See how happy the beloved is. Be happy like him, and be in his exalted position instead of in this humility and degradation. Enter into this greatness and not into that destruction."

Then he proceeds to reason, and at length he understands. The one thing leads to destruction, the other side promises safety. But in the destruction there is the hand of God, while in safety there is the hand of

Satan. All things that are selfish are taught by that power and by that knowledge which is the enemy of mankind. He is an enemy because he leads man away from the purpose of his life. Satan is he who leads you astray from the purpose of your life. He seeks to make the lover change places with the beloved, saying "Your position is better than mine, now I would like to be like you," and perhaps he will wait all his life to gain that coveted position and it never comes because the beloved would not surrender the wealth when the chance was there.

The life of a person would be quite changed after being melted in the fire of love. The fire of love will exalt him even so that with animals and birds his power will have influence, the wise and foolish both will be attached to him alike; once he is purified, born in love, he will become the attraction of every soul of every being invisible as well as visible. It is only the advice of Satan that keeps him from that. Master is he who suffers. Many times do we reflect how Jesus Christ washed the feet of his disciples. What beauty there is in that service, in that humility! Can you see that beauty is a proud man? Can a proud man win the hearts of the world for centuries and centuries and centuries? The proud man is led by Satan—egoist, selfish, cold, everyone in his presence will freeze, for his presence is as ice, and cannot impart comfort.

But how forgiving he becomes who has been through all suffering. Was there anything else in Christ's life but forgiveness and tolerance. "Always forgive, always forgive, always tolerate," He says. It was because the love in the heart of the Master was so great that it appealed to everyone. Love was all the philosophy that his fishermen could understand, and if love were placed before philosophy and religion how devoted would the devotees become. The animals would become attracted, the birds would become attracted by the power of man's heart aflame with love!

As it is, man only frightens love away on the least

suspicion of its appearance; and love never wants to come nearer. How often is the word 'love' used in everyday life for what is nothing but an amusement, a pleasure, a pastime, a degraded thing.

Love is so much higher. It is not a thing that you can give to a person, or of which a person may say "I can develope it." He cannot learn it, he cannot study it in a book; there is only this one thing to be done, to allow it to grow in the heart.

A person cannot live without his heart, and the heart cannot exist without love. However loveless and cold a person seems to be, however wicked and cruel he seems to be, he nevertheless has love, though it is hidden. There is a thick wall built round it. It has no means of coming out. It is continually kept within this shell, and it is uneasy and restless. That is why man becomes cold and unhappy, always wanting he knows not what, because the only true inclination he does not understand. The good power has become captive in a thick shell, a shell of coldness, the frozen part of love, and this shell refuses outlet to the stream of love, the divine power which seeks to emerge through the heart. When he does not give outlet to this love he becomes a burden to others; his presence becomes disagreeable to his surroundings, his influence becomes a burden to himself. Many times it is this that has caused people to be disagreeable in nature. And even for this reason some persons go mad. Not knowing what they want in life, they always blame others for not having loved them, and sympathised with them or been kind to them. They do not realise that the key lies in themselves; in their heart lies the power to open and melt anyone's heart. It is our own power that can bring another to our feet.

Whoever learns this truth ceases to blame a person for being cold to him, unkind to him, unsympathetic towards him. He finds that it is within himself that the cause lies. By seeking the sympathy and good feeling of another he covers his own heart and stops

it from expressing itself. The good power is ever wishing to come out to impress itself upon its surroundings, and yet it is as if the doors were being ever closed to prevent God from coming out to fulfil the purpose of His own creation!

How beautiful are the words of the prophet when he says that "The shrine of God is the heart of man." How true that is. Is God to be found in a mosque or temple or church or in any place where people sing hymns and offer their prayers? Can He be found where there is no love? He is not to be found in the houses which men have made for worship. These are only schools for children and their playgrounds. Children like playing with toys, and yet they are preparing themselves for something else. When man has come to know the real beauty of God, he will find that it is only in one place—namely the heart of man!

God is love, and He is found in the heart of man!

He who understands this can even worship God in man, for in abiding by this philosophy he is ever considering that in every aspect and at every moment he may be injuring or hurting the feelings of God; he is in danger of breaking the shrine of God in breaking the heart of his fellow-man.

It might be thought that the philosophers and mystics and sages who are so near and close to God may take too much freedom with the world. But they are on the contrary the most tender and delicate of mankind. They are ready to share anyone's trouble, to share anyone's sorrow, to share everybody's depression and despair. They are ready to console any and every person with their words and to help with their service, and to give their sympathy always to those who require it. They shrink at no sacrifice of time, money, pleasure or comfort. As the Christ teaches "If anyone desire you to walk with him one mile, walk with him ten."

What does all this teach us? It is all a lesson in

sympathy with one's fellow-man. Share in his troubles, in his despair, for whoever really experiences the joy of life, it becomes so great that it fills his heart and his soul. It does not matter if he has less comfort or position than many in this world, because the light of his kindness, of his sympathy, of the love that is growing, the virtue that is springing up in his heart,—all fill the soul with light. There is nothing now that he lacks in life for he has become the king of it!

Such a person becomes a healer, a real healer. He heals a person with his glance, with a kind word, with his hand, by his comfort, by his nature. What a healing that is! Unpretentious unassuming healing. The real healing is when a man is in sympathy with another's trouble and gives him a helping hand. *He* is the possessor of the true wine. He who can send from his eye the glance that proves the sympathy and help he is anxious to give, what a healing power he has! Is it not as when a bird is taken in beneath the brooding wings. There cannot be a more beautiful process of healing than this among all the different methods with which many have endeavoured to heal.

People may question "What should be the object which we should love in this life?" Is there any particular object that man can be recommended to love? Is it best to love the parent, or friends; to love one alone, or to love just one beloved of the opposite sex; should one love something in the abstract, some Spirit, some ideal, some Name, or something which is beyond man's nature? Or should one love something which we idealise as the God whom we worship?" There are many who say that there is no other love which is useful but the love of God. All other things are worthless. Another says "I can love no-one who is of the opposite sex?" Why? "Because I was once disappointed in one." Another will say, "I will love no human being; I can love my dog or my cat better. They do not

disappoint me, whereas I was once disappointed in man." Another says, "I love my money, because if I am in need that is the only friend that comes to my rescue. The deposit I have in my bank does more for me than anyone can do. Why then should I not love my money?" Another person says, "If God is all, if He is to have all love, then why not love the chair, or the table, or a book, or the work that a person does—a work of art, a work of music, a sculpture,—is it not the same?"

But all these questions are voiced by hearts who have once been disappointed, once broken. They broke and became closed, and once the doors of the heart are closed there is no light to guide its path. That is what is so beautiful in that little English song "The light of a whole life dies when love is done." There is no light when the love is done. When the love is done, the heart is closed.

So often does every one meet with people who will complain that the love on the part of the lover failed to satisfy and caused their despair and distress. What does the Sufi learn, what does the sage learn from this? He learns this—that it is those who love who gain. Those who have loved and not gone forward are those who have lost. The reason why they have gone back before reaching their destiny has been that they were dependent upon the object of love which disappointed them. The Sufi is aware of this great pit on the path. Whenever the lover, who was attracted by beauty, falls from his love, it is because he depended on the beauty. It was the beauty that he loved, and he could only stand as long as that beauty remained his ideal. The lover rises again when he considers within himself and says "I will make an ideal such as shall allow my life to become self-sufficient. The ideal will be my excuse, but in reality I will raise my love. Whenever love was broken it was only because my ideal did not prove to be according as the lover expected it to be. I will

therefore avoid blinding my eyes with the external life, but will build the path on which to travel in my own heart. That ideal will suffice and fill everything that the beloved may lack." This lover is the real lover, because love has a beauty too, and he produces from his own love the beauty which perhaps the beloved lacks, and he no longer notices the lack in his beloved. From this time, the beloved becomes his love because he has made a beloved in his thought, in his imaginations, and he can continually add to the beauty of the manifestation.

In this manner is it that the song of love and beauty has been sung in all periods of history. Sa'di of Persia, Dante of Italy, and all the great ones who have loved and appealed to the heart of man, all of them have left words which pierce through our heart to-day because of the greatness of their ideal. They have themselves created their ideal in their own heart. For all such there can no longer be a question of the Beloved proving unworthy of love. The lover has become the creator of the love.

Did not God create love? Have not you inherited this beauty-of-God? Can *you* not create love also? That which you can create can always be depended on.

There is another side. The ideal of love which is created by man is according to his evolution. If he is material, he will appreciate material beauty in a person or object. He cannot help this. It is not his fault. It is right to admire that which directly appeals to him. One person will prefer beauty of mind, of virtue, of personality, of some good manner, of some goodness which appeals to him; he values a beautiful personality, a sympathetic presence, patience. Another person will perhaps like the soul in the form of inspiration, intuition, peace of mind, joy. He finds his ideal in that.

Therefore one cannot point to any particular object as the only object worthy of love because

beauty is only according to a person's evolution. He who is of lower evolution cannot love a higher object. but a person of higher evolution can love the lower as well as the higher. He who once loves cannot hate. The one who hates is he who cannot appreciate. Hatred is found in the lower grade of evolution, not in the higher. And the higher the evolution proceeds, the less does the hatred and prejudice become. In the higher realm there is no poison, for the object is higher, the standard is higher, the sphere is greater. As high as you set your ideal, so high do you attain, and it is by raising the standard of beauty step by step that one rises up and up into the highest heaven.

It is by walking along and keeping ever on the path of love that even from the lowest depth the soul can reach the highest heaven. Man can ever raise his ideal to that height in which he becomes able to love God-the-Formless, God-the-Nameless who is above all goodness and virtue. Not even He can be restricted to virtue, for He is beyond goodness.

There are sages who are moved to tears just by saying to themselves one word of Essential Truth, of Abstract Truth. What was it that should have this effect? Was there some pain concealed in it? Was anything said to evoke sympathy? No, it was their ideal that was so high that they see the Ideal Beauty in the Truth. The Truth of Being has become beautiful to them. Their beloved has become God, and when a word of truth is spoken in their hearing they are moved to tears. To these sages Everything is a real manifestation.

If they go to hear music, in that music they feel God, in that music they see God. If they are standing before a picture, in the beauty of that picture they see their Beloved. If they are standing in a crowd, with all its manner of faces (both dirty and clean), to them the whole picture is one Harmony, one Vision of the Sublime, and they can see the whole

Beauty there. Whether it be desert or sea or sky or land,—whatever it is that is before their eyes—all has a vision of beauty to offer to them. And it is in that way that the whole Manifestation has become for them an Immanence of the

BEAUTY OF GOD.

* * * * * *

Love, Harmony and Beauty are inseparable and complementary. The world we see is the manifestation of beauty, and was the outcome of Love's desire to manifest itself. The different degrees of beauty which exist are united by that harmony which underlies them all, since all together make the one Manifestation. Love is the great Creator, and every lover is able to create the same love which the Source of Love has given birth to.

Love becomes beautiful the more truly it loses itself in its beloved, for true love shrinks at no sacrifice, endures all seeming reverses, and sees in all the torments inflicted by its beloved only higher steps to attain to the highest heaven. True love beholds no forgiveness however great the injury that it has received, for love's heart has ever open doors through which God can pass to fulfil the purpose of His own creation.

God is love, and He has realised it in the heart of man. When man becomes an imitator of God, he also realises his love in the heart of the fellowman who has become the manifestation of the Invisible. From this time the renewed man becomes himself the great healer, filling everyone with his own joy and sympathy and virtue and light. His presence becomes as the brooding wings which shelter the frightened fledglings.

Thus the real lover is he who produces from his own love that beauty which the beloved lacks. He it is who pierces all hearts like a two-edged sword, with the invincible greatness of his ideal. He it is who sees in all beautiful things,—nay in all creatures—the one great Vision of the Sublime, and finds in the whole Manifestation an Immanence of His Beloved, the Beauty of God.

Nature's Religion.

ALTHOUGH it is no exaggeration to say that there are numberless religions in the world, yet every religion has so many different sects and churches and chapels that this life is not long enough to study them. Indeed it would be impossible to even count them over in one life.

That which is really to be studied proves to be a very different thing, for the thinker perceives that many different religions have sprung out of one religion, one church. The religion may begin in east or west, in south or north; yet it will end in many. The more we think upon how all can come from one, the plainer becomes the fact that all are expressions of one religion. And this religion is Nature's religion.

The questions as to what exactly this religion can be, and in what manner it may become known, can only be answered by those who have raised themselves beyond the limitations of ceremonial and dogmatism which they are always first instructed in. But 'rising above a religion' does not mean 'giving up the religion.' It means 'being fully benefited by the religion.' Those who say they have given up their religion are not above it. They alone are above it who have arrived at full understanding of the Spirit of Religion. As soon as the Spirit of Religion has become manifest, then indeed are the eyes blessed! The distinctions and differences of castes and creeds and religions all vanish away in one moment of time!

Once this is perceived, there ceases to be anything to criticise; it is all one what form of worship is to be used, what church is to be attended, what book is to

be read. From this time is it seen that there is no such thing as a heretic, no such thing as a heathen, no difference between Kafir and Moslem. But until this truth is perceived there is always the thought that "whatever religion or belief or faith I have or hold, the scripture that I read, the church that I visit,—that is the only scripture, the only church, the only faith; this that I have understood and regarded as mine all through my life, this is the only Path!"

It is as when a person is in pursuit of a bird. He is looking at the branch of the tree which is still shaking after the bird has flown from it. He says, 'oh, here is the bird,'—but he is only looking at the branch trembling hither and thither after the bird had sat there just for a moment. He calls the branch the bird! Another person may see a branch moving, but this time the branch is so strong that the bird could not possibly have moved it. Not understanding this, he thinks the bird used to sit on that branch. "That is where the bird sat." Thus it is with the Truth.

Instead of understanding the spirit of the Truth, people have taught that religion lies in the name of the Teacher. Importance is given to the name of the Teacher, to the Scripture, to the house in which worship is customary, to the priests or clergy who officiate. Prominence is given to being Brahmin or Buddhist, to belonging to certain communities formed in the name of the particular religion, to the castes formed, to the families formed, to those associations made in order to follow one particular creed or ceremony or law. Finally the patriotism to that particular religious system becomes its life, and this leads to the neglect—not only neglect, but actual hatred—of the religion followed by others. It is in this way that all wars, all differences that have existed from all time, have arisen.

When one studies Nature, one finds that Nature

cannot create itself without expressing its religion. The origin of all religion is love and beauty. If there were no love or beauty, religion would never have come, because beauty is the beginning of worship and prayer. The beginning of prayer is admiration. The first step of worship is admiration.

A child knows nothing about religion, and yet from the very first he is attracted to something that is beautiful, something that he can like. As he grows older, it is only the form of his wants that changes; he still seeks to acquire the object of beauty. As he grows older still, he comes to recognise beauty in intellectual things. It is beauty that man bows down to. When a man gives honour and respect and reverence to another it is still because of the beauty which he perceives in some form or the other in a person, and he has a natural inclination to bow before this beautiful living thing. Prayer and worship are acts of bowing to beauty, acts necessary to satisfy the predisposition with which every soul is born—the predisposition which is called Love. And it is the innate desire of Love to satisfy itself by admiring and bowing before someone, to respect some one, to have veneration for some one, to worship someone.

Man goes step by step from simple worship to the worship of the Most High as he realises a higher and higher ideal. We can see this when we study the history of religions. The desire to pay respect, the desire to idealise is that which has made man worship idols or worship trees. Some people consider 'this tree is sacred.' And even in bowing before trees the desire of Love is satisfied, its desire to humble itself, its desire to pay respect and reverence; and by this means the love of the heart has its outlet. Such people are not evolved enough to know where God is; He is not before their eyes like this idol is. How can He be known Who is not seen? Therefore people bow before beautiful flowers, beauti-

ful herbs, beautiful trees in the forest, Others bow before rocks which have a certain form which attracts them and produces in them the desire to use this particular rock as the object to bow before, thus bringing satisfaction to the soul's desire to bow and pay respect.

Then, as intelligence developed still more, people would perceive that sometimes they were higher than the rock before which they previously bowed. "That rock is low; we can touch it; we can reach the top of it; there are a thousand others like it." Therefore they come to think "it is best to worship the sun, because there can be nothing higher than the sun. We cannot get near it. There is nothing as bright as the sun. When the sun appears, does it not take away all our gloom, and worries, and all the fears of the dark night also; it takes away all the conditions of death and destruction as thieves, robbers, tigers and lions in countrysides and villages,—all clear away when the sun rises; and then a new life begins, strength comes, vigour comes, energy comes, enthusiasm to go out in the world comes. This is the one object that takes away fear, and this is that which, when it goes away, allows us to be afraid again and hide in our little villages."

And this worship of the sun lasts a long long time. In places like Persia and in places like Eastern Russia, where there is always sun but always need of a fire, the people sought refuge from the cold weather by sitting near the fire. The light of the fire becomes a company in loneliness, the heat of the fire brings comfort, the light takes away fear, the heat purifies everything that comes into it. So that is how it is that in those countries where there is coal they call fire sacred and bow before it in obedience to the same innate yearning to bow and pay respect.

But man ascended still higher until he began to think "no, no; the sun which goes away and comes back, appears and disappears,—this is not con-

stantly with us. So I will seek something that is constantly with us." And what is that? Surely it is the imagination! Surely it is a spirit that is God! In Mongolia and China and in all those eastern countries where there are numberless gods worshipped, they say "that one thing that lasts through day and night, through trouble and sorrow, through joy and sadness, that thing, that spirit—that is God!"

Then comes the time when the ruling power is seen in every object, in every being, in every plant, every star; a controlling power ruling so many diverse objects. Thus it comes about that the heroes were respected, kings were worshipped, and even every planet or star was thought to represent a separate God. This ideal of worship was developed among the Greeks and Hindoos.

Then we come to the Semitic race, the race from which the beginning of the Bible is to be traced—the Children of Israel. Abraham noticed people around him worshipping idols, people worshipping symbols, and people worshipping sacred cows or beasts or birds. He considers about God, thinking "No, if you are anywhere you must be somewhere within me, and I want to find you." Once, lying awake, he repeats His name, and as He thus thinks about Him He seeks to see some sign of that One Who is really worthy of worship. Again, in his visions, he sees the Star, and arises to ask "are you the God?" And the answer comes from within that "it is not He. It comes and goes, for it is not stable nor steady. An object that is worthy of worship must be constantly before me." Then, next day, he sees the moon and asks "are you the God?" And the answer comes "no." for the moon takes its light from the sun." Then he sees the sun and asks the same question and the answer comes "no," that which appears or disappears however perfect in its light and form cannot be the Eternal God. And thus he perceives that God is a higher ideal than the sun or moon or anything

that words can ever express; a God who is unseen and without form and without Name—altogether beyond man's conception. That is how that ideal of "one God" began.

This great ideal came through different prophets, and was expressed in different ways. If Moses said "one God; none other gods but Me," Jesus Christ said "not only one God but one Life also; the whole Perfection is One." The sun is not what we see; there is the sun, there is the manifestation which we see, and there is that which proceeds from the sun—all three aspects of the one. "My Father and I are one." "That which proceeds from the Father and the Son is one"—all three aspects which create a puzzle in man's mind; he can remain in this puzzle all his life. There is the thing itself, there is its manifestation, and there is that which proceeds from it, always this 'trinity' in one. In all ages the message was given with truth and wisdom as each messenger came, but how could all understand the truth when everybody has not been able even to love another? Language can hardly express it, and it is hard to understand.

The same difficulty arose at the time of Mahomet. He says to his people, who were the worshippers of so many gods, "there is no god but One God." They ask "where is He?" Is He in our temples? Is He in the Kaaba?" He says, "no, His temple is in man's heart." "How far away is He?" "He is nearer to you than yourself." "In what can we find Him?"

"In all things and all beings."

"What is His sign?"

"He is beyond all signs and yet all are His signs. He cannot be restricted to one centre or one form or one name, because all names are His names, all forms are His Form, all in heaven or earth are his beings and there is only One!" If you want to find Him you will find Him in the higher intelligence. When

intelligence manifests itself on the surface, that is God. In manifesting Himself, He has assumed various forms; through each of these He seeks gradually to attain to the same state of Absolute Being.

Every form—rock, animal, bird, man, everyone—is always striving to climb to the surface. The Bible says "raise your light on high; it is covered under a bushel." The bushel is the manifestation of our life; all these forms that cover the inner Intelligence which in its original aspect is the root of being are the bushel. The inner intelligence, the Light, has become veiled under the manifestation, and it is the desire of Nature to unfold herself again, so as to allow herself to behold her original being which it does by all changes that take forms of death and destruction.

This great truth, so difficult to express, must needs be uttered by every prophet, every teacher, every saint who has brought the message, in that language which their hearers could understand. If the teacher perceived that the method used by the hearers was good, he would advise them to continue in the same mode of worship, to continue to go into such a temple, or such a church,—until they were able to perceive what is the real truth hidden behind all these things.

Having grasped the idea of God, there comes this question—of the mode of worshipping Him. Religion offers many ways of worship. Divers religions offer many modes of worship which have become the law of each religion and how can that law be obeyed by the whole world? Let us ask the ministers of any religion—of Islam, of Christianity, of Buddhism of Hinduism—whether their own law can become the law for the religion of the whole world? Though each one of them will say "yes" yet surely it is not meant so. All are not alike; the tendencies of each people are not alike; their habits are not alike. For an instance, the law of the Hindu is to go to the Ganges in the morning and bathe in it. How would

that do in London? How would one bathe in the Thames in December before offering one's prayers! You will perceive at once that no-one could do such a thing. Again, a Mussulman obeys the law of leaving his shoes outside the mosque, and then goes to wash his hands and feet and makes his ablutions in running water; then he goes and stands on the marble floor of the mosque and offers up his prayers. If the same mode of worship were to be the law for Russia, where there is so much cold and snow underfoot, to prostrate oneself on the marble would mean to be frozen to death in one day, and then they would never live to take the name of any religion again!

In this way we see that it cannot be that the one faith and religion and hope can be promoted and advocated in all the different lands and places alike. The different faiths are bound to become unrecognised and forgotten, and those who wish to promote their own customs would cease to imagine such a thing could they realise that every person has a different temperament, that every form of religion is a form of worship of the same God. Nature teaches every soul to worship God in some way or other, and often provides that which is suitable for each. Those who want one law to govern all have lost sight of the spirit of their own religion. And it is in people who have not yet learnt their own religion that such ideas are commonly found. Did they but know their own religion, how tolerant they would become, and how free from any grudge against the religion of others!

So it is, too, with *the manner of worship*. It does not matter in what way a person offers his respects and his reverence to the deity he worships. It only matters how sincere he is in his offering. In the one house of God we find people are without their hats; in Hindustan, Persia and Arabia, they put on turbans to go to the mosque. That is their custom. It makes no difference whether one person prays standing, another sitting, another kneeling, another

prostrating, another in company with other people, and another alone. All that matters is that the heart of the worshipper is pure, that the mind is correct with God, that there is sincerity, and earnestness.

There is a story that a farmer boy, who was taking care of his father's cattle in the jungle, had heard a teacher of religion in his village. This teacher was teaching about God and glorifying the name of God. The young boy was so impressed that when he goes to the jungle next time, he experiences that innate tendency to worship someone, and so, in the jungle, he began to say aloud, "Oh, God, I have heard so much about you, you are so good and kind that I feel that if you were here by me I would take such good care of you, more than of all my sheep, more than of all my fowls. In the rain I would keep you under the roof of my grass-shed; when it is cold, I would wrap you in my blanket, and in the heat of the sun I would give you a bath. I would put you to sleep with your head on my lap, and I would fan you with my hat, and I would always watch you and guard you from wolves. I would give you bread of manna, and would give you buttermilk to drink; and to entertain you I would sing and dance and play my flute. O God, oh come and see how I would tend you." Then Moses, the messenger of God, comes up and hears all that the boy says, and answers, "oh boy, how foolish is this conversation! God, the unknown and unseen, who is in the heavens, the One before Whom there is no night, no strength that can stand, He is Almighty; the might is all His. He is beyond form and name and colour; He is beyond the perception and comprehension of man."

The boy was disheartened, and afraid at what he had done. But the next message from God was that "We are very displeased indeed with you that you have separated a devotee who did not know us. If he did not know us as you do, at least he knew us as far as his mind could grasp. All our devotees picture

us in different forms and according to different qualities of love, and we receive their love through whatever form or garb it is directed to us. They are all our creatures and we receive it even if they worship the sun. We have sent you to unite our children to us, and not to separate them from us.''

How we would keep our wisdom covered, did we only realise that the first step of approach to God is sincerity and earnest love for Him! We should never call anyone heathen or pagan. We should never consider anybody in this world as unworthy. We do not know in what form a person is worshipping God. We do not know the earnestness in man's heart. Yet that is the real thing.

The Law about Right and Wrong.—It is not only the learned, or so-called educated and enlightened persons who perceive the meaning of the law of right and wrong. Even among savages is there some sense of it, because it is an instinct; it is the law by which the savage lives. We may think many people are doing wrong, yet we do not know what is wrong for them and what is not wrong; we do not know what is right for them and what is not right. We ourselves may be doing many things that we think right but really are wrong to others; and things that appear to us to be wrong others do and yet are acting rightly in their case. It is just a matter of looking at the point of view which the other has.

How few there are in this world who stop to think whether the actions of another are right for *him*. We are so ready to accuse another, and we are so ready to hide our own faults. Did we only apply to them the decision between right and wrong from *their* standpoint, we should find that the meaning of right and wrong would each change. It is wrong for a little child to go out without asking its parents, because perhaps he will meet a motor-car from which he cannot protect himself. But can the same thing be wrong for a grown-up! It is only during the age

of childhood that the act is wrong, in the later age it is right.

Did but we study the object of life we should come to understand the nature of right and wrong, and once we knew the nature of right and wrong we should not consult the law of the Scripture, but that law of the Scripture would then itself begin to reveal to us its own truth. Nature herself can tell us what is right and wrong for us and for another.

The secret of it all is found in the answer to the question, 'Why is man here?' The answer is 'he is here to attain with satisfaction his innermost desire.' And what is that innermost desire? It is first joy, then peace.

But the attainment of each is contrary, because joy comes from activity of life, and peace comes from rest. All this activity that a person experiences and enjoys by his sense is a glimpse of joy. The greater joy comes when he can experience through his inner self also, through his mind. For there is another joy, that of the mind when it is delighted with a thing of truth or delicacy or beautiful thought. Beautiful music, beautiful verse, beautiful imagination—all bring delight! It is perhaps a greater joy than the joy of a delicious dish, for some persons would give anything for a verse which they would never give for a delicious dish!

But there is a still greater joy, that of the heart, the innermost being of a person,—the joy when this heart can express itself and experience love. There are many in this world who only live in the body; their heart is dead, their mind is dead; they seek their highest joy only in the body. But there are others who live in mind as well as in body. It is like the difference between a thoughtful man and an ordinary man. When a man is a thoughtful man he has become a different man. This view is expressed by the word 'gentleman.' Of course there are very few who could be truly called

'gentlemen,' though many times they pass for such. The gentleman is he who is beginning to live in his mind, whose mind is becoming alive, who enjoys life too. He is not delighted merely with the experience of the senses.

But he whose heart is awakened is higher than a gentleman. Such an one can sympathise with another, his sympathies are awake to consider another, to think for another, to serve another, to sacrifice for another. He is not merely a gentleman, he is a saint. The power of sympathy and love takes away the gross self which used to demand all for itself. Once that is taken away, man thinks far higher. "Whatever I can do for another, that will I do; I will sacrifice all I have; the loss is no matter; it is a satisfaction." To satisfy the heart, what that is! This also is a part of Joy. But it is not Peace!

Joy is the desire of attainment by the world. Peace is the attainment of heaven. In the ordinary sense, we call it peace to be at rest in an armchair, on cushions, or in bed. But when the body is on a beautiful couch, does that mean that the mind is resting in cushions also? Cannot the mind go through torture at the same time? If that be the case, of what benefit is the peace and comfort of body? The whole being must have peace. The mind must have peace from anxieties, worry, the greed that gives us ambitious desires, and that we call 'wrong' and 'sin.' When all this has gone, the mind is at rest. Then, when the heart is at peace and has done its work of love, the heart has enough, it ceases to be interested in any particular object in life, but is equal towards all. When there is no demand there is peace, and this peace helps to peace of soul.

These are the two desires which we hold. It is when we do not know the manner in which to retain these two desires that sometimes the peace of one part of our being takes away the peace of the other; the joy of one part of our life takes away the joy of the

other part of our being. It is when man once knows this that he is able really to master himself, to manage his life's affairs as he wishes, to have a better idea of what is right and what is wrong, what is sin and what is virtue.

This knowledge is gained through a study of life rather than of books. Did we only know how much the study of life can tell us! One could go into the British Museum and read every book in the building, and yet may not obtain satisfaction. It is not study, it is not research, it is not enquiry, which gives this knowledge—it is actually going through the experiences of life, witnessing life in its different aspects and in its different phases or spheres—that is the thing which reveals the ideal of life!

A man may know about the whole world's doings, saying within himself "in the morning I will go from my home to the office, and will find out all about the world from my paper before I go." But all he has learnt is what the newspapers feed him with, for next day, how often is the news of to-day contradicted! Still, he is satisfied, thinking he has learned so much about the world in the morning. And in the evening he is ready to discuss topics at the dinner-table. And next day there is something fresh. But is that knowledge?

How wonderful the sight that is given to us, how marvellous is the mind, how great a treasure is the light of the soul!—can this be intended only for things like that? If we only knew the value of our life, the value of our soul, we would give the precious time that is ours to a keen observation with calm perception combining the aptitude of a student with the care of a scientist.

Look not on life as a person would watch a play on the stage; rather look upon it as a student who is learning in a college. It is not a "passing show"; it is not a place of amusement in which to fool our life away. It is a place for study in which every

sorrow, every heart-break brings a precious lesson; it is a place in which to learn the suffering of self by the study of the suffering of another, to learn from the people who have been kind to us as well as from the people who have been unkind to us; it is a place in which all experiences (be they disappointments, struggles and pains, or joys, pleasures, comforts, and everything of the kind) contribute to the understanding of what life is, and realising what it is.

Then do we awake to the religion of Nature, the only religion. And the more you understand it, the greater your life becomes, and the more blissful will your life be for others.

* * * * *

Nature's religion is the secret of all religion. Every religion is one of the faces of that One Religion. Whatever differences exist, they are due to the differences of perception of degrees of beauty. In every religion it is an ideal beauty that is bowed to. To some, the ideal beauty is a small thing, to others it is as vast as the sun; to some it is a living hero, to others it is a crystallised sculptured thought. The temple of the true God is in man's heart, and yet He is not restricted to one centre, or one form, or one name. He has veiled Himself under the manifestation, yet constantly seeks to remove the veil. To some he removes it in one manner, to some He reveals Himself in another, but it is all one veil, and He Who is behind the veil is also all one. Far be it from any to judge the form or the mode or the manner of worship of another, saying "this is right, that is wrong," since none can know but what is right for us is wrong for another.

The secret of Nature's religion is the attainment of joy and peace of another. He who has forsaken the desire for the attainment of his own joy and peace, having lost it in the gift of joy and peace to others,—that one has entered into the shrine of Nature's religion!

The Personality of God.

THAT ethical point of view of God which conceives Him as a personality is really a conception of the self; the divine love, power and inspiration are really within oneself. But when a person who has not truly studied and understood the subject of God's personality begins to talk about it, he is apt to destroy the religious beliefs of many besides his own. Not only is he apt to go astray himself, through failing to assimilate the knowledge from the ethical point of view, but he will also confuse others in their faiths and beliefs.

After reading a few ethical books and after considering the Christ-idea from the ethical point of view, and the idea of God from that point of view, a person may go and tell a friend who has simple faith in Jesus Christ and has never considered "ethics" or science or philosophy, but has always held a picture of the Lord before him (or her), fearing to displease the Lord by doing this or doing that, devoted to her Lord,—such person may go and tell this friend "there is no such thing as Jesus Christ; He never came on earth; it is a myth; it is an ideal; it is an ethical ideal." What happens? The plant of devotion, the ideal in the heart, the plant that leads further and further in development—is broken by him, and his friend is driven either to shut the doors of her heart (which should be kept protected) or she must give up her faith! To yield is to go astray, and yet not to yield may be to go astray also!

There is a danger, then, of an ethical point of view destroying one's own religion and understanding; and there is a greater danger of its doing so in the case of the religion of others.

The Sufi always tries to keep the Ideal of God, not only as a philosophy, but as a religious philosophy. It has always been garbed with religion that it may not be a bare truth of the ideals of a Master, a Saviour, a God. For, of all those who have the ethical point of view there may be perhaps not one in a thousand who has so experienced trouble, distress and sorrow and the pains of life, as to be able to use his ethical knowledge for his life. The majority of people, having an aptitude for study, obtain the ethical knowledge, but proceed to criticise their own religion or that of others, and endeavour to destroy the faith which others have—such is human nature.

It is "human nature" to take others and lead them astray from their path. It is rare for anyone to ask himself "have *I* gone astray? I will at least not mislead another." The true parent would think like that. He would say "my children shall be happier; they shall not make the mistakes which we have made." So, once the love of human kind has developed in the heart of man, he begins to understand other people as the parent does his children, and say to himself "if others lead you astray, at least I will not."

Really speaking, the ideal of God is a bridge connecting the limited life with the unlimited. Whoever travels on this bridge passes safely from the limited to the Unlimited Life. The bridge may be taken away, it is true, and yet one may swim across the chasm, but one may be drowned too! The ideal of God is a *safe* bridge which takes you safely to the goal.

There are FOUR PATHS or STAGES that lead a person into spiritual knowledge from the limited to the unlimited.

The FIRST STAGE is Shariat. This is where the God-ideal is impressed upon mankind as Authority which refers to fear of God. This is conscientiousness, not fear, as usually thought. If you have love,

you do not wish to displease; love does not force you to an act, but it asks you to be conscientious and take care not to cause the least disharmony with the one whose happiness you want. The first lesson is to idealise someone who is beyond the personalities of earth, more than mortal, a protector more than a father, guardian, king; mightier than the nations; richer than all the super-millionaires in this world.

Wonderful though the goodness is that one sees in the mother, causing you to say, "yes, she is kind and merciful," it is nothing compared with the perfection of kindness and mercy in God. That which attracts you to the mother is limited; unlimited mercy and kindness is only to be seen in God.

We perceive that all things that give protection, peace, fear, love are only found in their perfection in the one ideal—that is, God.

Such a person offers his prayers, worships him, thinks of him, holds the Ideal in his mind, and a kind of connection comes to be established between him and the Ideal, so that in a time of depression, of despair, of sorrow and helplessness he has the Ideal within immediate reach. He can say "I know someone greater, a greater Friend than anyone in the world, to whom all respect and worship and humility is due; can we find a Friend so faithful, Who will all our sorrows share? . . . Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer; in His arms he'll take and shield thee; Thou wilt find a solace there." Therefore he reaches Him in his despair and trouble.

This stage of Shariat is where a person thinks "what will please Him or displease Him?" He learns his religion from his parents, his friends. A good action pleases, a bad action displeases; and pride displeases most; he learns everything very easily by seeing what displeases another. How easy it is, and still they go to a clergyman to ask, to a priest to ask "what pleases God?" and all the

time it is just what pleases man that pleases God, and therefore if you please all around you, you please God, if you displease them, you displease God! Such a person realises what reward comes to him when he pleases the world, and what happens when he does not. Just think of the peaceful state of the person who has done some good to another, what condition is his when he retires to bed at night—what joy, what peace, what sense of safety. Whereas the person who has harmed another, stolen something, caused trouble or pain, his punishment is with him also. The reward and the punishment can be seen in one's own day; there is no need to wait for heaven or hell; every day is heaven or hell once we realise what reaction one's own works bring on oneself.

The NEXT STAGE is called Tarikat. In this stage one finds what it is that really matters—what it is that is really wrong, and what it is that is really right—how some wrong is hidden under what people call "right," and right is hidden under that which we call "wrong." It is now that one begins to understand the nature of things. What the whole world calls "wrong" may be right, although he pleases the world at the same time he thinks of the pleasure of God first. He goes on until instead of finding the pleasure of God in the world, he also finds it in his own being, by his own conscience, by his own intelligence. He also begins to be able to say: "yes, it is true there is a Creator, it is true I am a creature; but at the same time where has God created me from? whence has He created the whole world? is it from Himself or from substance, and if substance has existed, where did that come from?"

Having begun to think in this way he begins to find that if there is any substance it is something that He made out of Himself. One can see that by considering one's own thoughts. When a person notices that a thought has come to him to do such a thing—where was it before? how did it arise? Surely, your mind

has in that case created something out of nothing, or out of yourself. Mind is one thing, thought is one thing, but at the same time, the thought is of the mind, the mind has created the thought, and yet the thought is not another substance, it is the substance of mind itself; but the mind as the knower of the thought and the creator of the thought stands at the back of the thought, and when the thought has disappeared the mind is there just the same. When the thought has gone. the mind is still there.

So it is with God. He has created all things; they are sustained a certain time and then lost from the sight of man, but at the same time they have come from Him, they are lost from Him, and He remains the same.

This then is the second stage, where the person understands the Creator.

The THIRD STAGE is that of Hakeekat. It is in this stage that man begins to realise the truth of the whole being. "The one whom I have called 'God,' and Whose Personality I have recognised and whose pleasure or displeasure I have sought"—this one, he begins to discover, "has been seeing His life through my eyes, has been hearing through my ears; it was His breath that came through my breathing, His impulse which I felt, and therefore I know that this body that I had held in my mind to be my own I really find is the true temple of *God*. I did not realise that this body is the shrine of God."

Not knowing that God experiences this life through man, one is seeking for Him somewhere else—in some person aloof and apart from the whole world, whereas all the time He is in oneself!

It is not meant that such a person is to set to work to break people's beliefs and say that God is both in heaven and in his body! People would answer "if God is in my body, I will no longer worship that God; I thought God was pure and in the heavens, and if he dwells in my body, the idea of which I cannot bear for

one moment," that person will be frightened, and go astray. That is why, in India, it is considered a great sin to awake anyone who is asleep. "If he is asleep, do not wake him; let him sleep; it is the time for him to sleep; it will not do to wake him before his time."

So, too, a mystic understands that a person who is taking his time to awaken must not be awakened to give him *his* idea—it is a sin, because he is not prepared to understand it, and his beliefs would be shaken. Let him go on thinking God is in Benares; let him think he is in the temple of Buddha; let him think He is in heaven; let him think He is in the seventh heaven above the sky;—it is the beginning; he will evolve in time to arrive at the same stage. The rest he is having just now is good for him. The awakening comes, all in its good time.

This explains what is meant by saying Sufism is a religious philosophy; the philosophy is garbed with religion, that it may not break the ideals and faiths and beliefs of those who are beginning their journey to the Goal. Externally the religion, inwardly the philosophy. The one who wants to understand will understand. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

It also explains why people in the past have pictured their philosophy as myths (Hindoos, Greeks; stories of gods and goddesses), and even in the carvings in wood and stone, as at Elephanta, truths are represented in pictures, which convey to the seer and the reader, the truths underlying all religions.

The FOURTH STAGE is Marefat. This is the knowledge which enables a person who has arrived at it to call God "Truth." He applies no other name to God but only "Truth"; in the end of his journey he has found the Divine Light which is Truth. The Light illuminating his whole being, the whole universe, and even a thousand universes if they were there, would be illuminated by it.

In the Bible it is written: "first there was the Word;

and there was Light!'' That means, ''that which is the first or highest knowledge is the Truth.'' Light gives knowledge, words give knowledge; in fact it is knowledge. The Quran says ''God is the light of the heaven and of earth.'' That means, ''that illumination to which one reaches.''

The story of Aladdin, who went in search of the lantern, teaches the same lesson. In the end you arrive at the stage where in the shrine of God you find the Light, the Light of Truth which illuminates all your life, the Light that suffices the whole being. When this light comes all the fear of God, the confusion, the puzzle—is gone! because all such are due to the lack of light. Whatever difficulty there was before us would not disappoint us if there were a light for us to see through it with. That which breaks the heart or brings despair is a difficulty or a trouble which we cannot see through; that means that our trouble in life is always the lack of light and nothing else, that every difficulty can be solved, and if we understand the nature of our difficulty, we can see our way through. It is the lack of light which does not give us the sight to see into our trouble, as well as the way out of it, and it is the Light which gives us the power to see into our difficulty as well as show the way out of it.

Therefore what we need in our life is the lantern of Aladdin. That is what is gained at the fourth stage of development, which is called Marefat.

Silent Life.

WHEN we look at the Universe we find there are two aspects of existence (1) life, (2) the condition which, compared with the other (which we call "life") seems to be lifeless. The one aspect of existence we call "life," the other aspect we overlook. We divide it according to periods and call it "time," or we compare it with objects and call it "space."

We say "this is alive" when the object shows some activity and consciousness, meaning that it can move and see and think. An object that cannot see and is not active, we call "dead." Whatever it is that seems to be void of activity and consciousness is called a "thing"; when it has consciousness and activity, it is called "living."

Where is the source of this consciousness and activity?

The circulation of blood, the energy of the movements of the body, the activity of the nerves and muscles—if we could only know what it is that keeps them in action! A person may say, it goes on mechanically like a clock, but the clock is not the source of the movement. The mind is the source of the clock; the mind has made the clock, has thought about it, has wound it; it continues to depend on man to keep it going. Therefore behind "clock" is "man." Even if it only wants winding up once a year, still there is Man behind it, whom you do not see.

It is the same with the whole mechanism of nature—all is mechanical and runs according to certain laws, and yet there is a source or origin of things hidden behind it all. As the artist is hidden behind his art, as the scientist is hidden behind his invention, so the mind is hidden behind the body, as the cause is hidden

behind the action. So there is one aspect of life which is hidden behind the other aspect of life, which alone is to be recognised as life.

Both science and religion show that consciousness has evolved through different stages, from mineral to vegetable, from vegetable to animal, and from animal to humanity. It is regarded as the achievement of modern science that this thought has been reached, but its source lies in the traditions of the past. The poem of Rumi, which appears on the Sufi Calendar, tells us the experience of consciousness from the mineral up to the plant--

I died as a mineral ,and rose a plant,
I died as a plant and rose again an animal.
I died as an animal and rose a man.
Why then should I fear to become less by dying?

. . . . . .

I shall die once again as a man
To rise an angel perfect from head to foot.
Again when I suffer dissolution as an angel
I shal become what passes the conception of man.

Vakil of Bokhara, Rumi.

Science stops to-day at man, but the poem says that from man I shall rise to an angel, and from angel I shall ascend to that stage of being which passes man's comprehension. And the poem was written in 1207-1273 A.D.

That proves the saying of Solomon, "there is nothing new under the sun." Man discovers something to-day, but in reality only brings to light something which existed in the past, either as history or as tradition. Even before Rumi, the idea was in the Quran.

What can we learn from this? Every activity which we call "life" has sprung from a source that is silent, and will always be silent; and every activity which is different in its aspect and peculiar to itself and different in its effect is still the activity of a tiny part of that life which is as wide as the ocean. Call it

"world," "universe," "nation," "country," "race," "community," or one individual or only a particle, "an atom"—its activity, its energy springs in each case from one inseparable and eternal silent aspect of Life.

And it has not only sprung from it, but it resolves itself into it also. You throw a pebble into the water, water that is still and calm itself; there comes an activity; it comes for one moment, and then it vanishes. Into what does it vanish? It vanishes into the same silence in which the water was before, and as the water is a substance that is active by nature, and the silence, the stillness, the calmness that it shows is just the original state, the effect of its original source. That means, that the natural inclination of every thing and every being is *silence*, because it has come from silence. And yet it is active, because it is activity that produces activity; and its end is silence.

Therefore, sages, mystics, and philosophers who have probed into the depths of life have seen what we call "life" is "death," and that what we call "no life" is the real Life.

A Hindustani poet says "raise your eyes friend, from this that you call life to that which perhaps you do not recognise as life, and then you will find that that which you had once called life is nothing but death, and that which you thought was nothing, that really speaking *is* life!"

When you come to the essence of the teachings of Christ you will see that from the beginning to the end the whole attitude of the Teacher is to tell mankind that there is a life beyond (i.e. higher than this life, higher in quality, not higher in time) this which you call life and yet is *not* life.

The life you recognise is only the mortal aspect of life. You have never seen or been conscious of the immortal aspect at all. Once realise *that* life, and that which you have hitherto called life is found to be only a glimpse or shadow of the real life that is beyond

comprehension. To understand it you will have to raise your light high from the cover that is covering it like a bushel. This cover is man's mind and body, it is a cover that keeps active the light on the world of things and beings. "Do not keep your light under a bushel" means that we are not to keep the consciousness absorbed in the study of the external world, and in its pleasures and enjoyments. Man is always apt to say the religious thinker is a dreamer, lost in vague ideals, having no proof for what he believes, far from what he himself would call "the reality." He never thinks that what *he* calls "real" has in its turn become "unreal" to the one to whom the Silent Life has become reality. Can you call this "real" which is subject to such changes every moment? Every activity and the object of every one's life—riches, power, love, friendship, childhood, youth, health, pleasure, displeasure, happiness, poverty—all are changing, in some cases it is soon, in others late. Can you think such things are the reality? What can you call all this that is subject to change, whose source is unseen and whose end is unseen, subject to death and destruction, after which it is seen no more? Can you call it "reality?" Or are not perhaps the realities really behind the scene, from whence it came, and to which it goes?

Perhaps many of you have experienced at some time or other, in your own home or in a church or in a temple or other religious place, how there is a kind of silence as you sit there. Compared with a bazaar or market or factory there is no activity. Have you, under such circumstances, noticed the condition of your own self, of your mind, of your thought, of your body? If you have felt any comfort have you thought why you feel comfort and rest?

Then, take another experience. One may be a few moments or a few hours in the woods, away and apart from everybody. It may seem as if even the trees and the leaves are keeping silence. The feelings that you

have at such a time cannot be expressed in words. The feelings cannot be called "pleasure" because that which we are accustomed to in pleasure or in joy are not the same. You could only say "that peculiar pleasure," "that peculiar joy." There is no name for it, and yet it is a true experience of the soul.

Then there is a still greater and deeper experience;—when a person is in a wilderness, near rocks in the desert, where there is no sound even of birds or beasts, when there is absolute silence. In the East, all the prophets from the time of Abram, Moses, David, and in the time of Christ and Mahomet—all the prophets of the old Tesatment and the New, and of the Quran—did they not receive their inspiration from the same Source? The history of Moses on Mount Sinai, the Prophet of Nazareth in the wilderness, the Prophet Mahomet on Ghari Hira—did they not all drink from the Silent Life? Though God is in all activities and forms and names, it is in His other aspect—solid, firm, eternal, all-sufficient and powerful, all-intelligent, undivided and inseparable—from which the inspiration came, came as a perfect inspiration so that the world could take it as "the sacred word" in all ages and in all times.

Then, coming to the cause of idol-worship. A person might think that the old custom of Brahmans and Buddhists, who went into the temple of Buddha or Krishna, and sat before an idol which neither spoke to them nor took notice of them—he might think "what could they gain"? It has a mouth and speaks not, it has hands yet cannot move; and so people mocked at them, scoffed at them and called them heathen and pagan. But they do not know of this *silence* that was impressed upon the worshipper. This human form sitting before them, silent and quiet and not speaking, or hearing or thinking—absolutely quiet. Just think what it means.

When one is among friends one may get tired; sometimes one enjoys their society but when one does not

enjoy it, one thinks "my life has gone from me." Why is this? It is the impression of *their* mind that has been produced in *his* mind. Perhaps someone has insulted him or snubbed him or told him this or that, and he goes into the society bringing all his troubles with him; and so he goes away still saying "I am tired." If you are working in a factory it is reasonable to be tired in body, but why should one be tired in society where people are laughing and chatting? It is because their condition of mind was not like yours!

But before the idol-god there is perfect harmony! see, here is someone sitting and quiet. A quiet human form which does not speak, what rest! It may not help, but it does not disturb. It keeps you silent. That was the idea.

What do we learn from this? Every effort was made by the teachers of religion to awake men to that aspect of life which is overlooked in the ordinary life, which he calls "life." Concentration, contemplation, meditation—all that is the essence of religion or mysticism or philosophy is nothing but this one thing—to attain to that depth of life which it seems that our life loves.

A Marathi poet has said "Oh mind, my restless mind, my mind with its thoughts of 1000 things which it supposes will make it happy saying 'if I had that I should be happy, if I had this, I should feel life was not wasted,' oh, my mind! will you tell me who in this world is happy?" The mind says "if I had the wealth which I see others have, I should be happy," but are they happy? *They* say "if I had some higher thing!"

The secret of happiness is hidden—hidden under the cover of the spiritual knowledge. And this spiritual knowledge is nothing but this, that there is a constant longing in the heart of man to have something of its origin, to experience something of its original state—the state of peace and joy which has been disturbed, and continues constantly to be disturbed, and yet is

sought after throughout one's whole life, and never can cease to be sought after until the real source has at length been realised. What was it in the wilderness that gave peace and joy? What was it that came to you in the forest, the solitude? In either case it is nothing else but the depth of your own life, which is silent like the depths of the great sea, so silent, and still. It is the surface of the sea that makes waves and roaring breakers; the depth is silent. So the depth of your own being is silent also.

And this all-pervading, unbroken, inseparable, unlimited and ever present, this omnipotent silence corresponds with your silence like the meeting of flames. Something goes out of the depths of your being to receive a something from There which comes to meet you; your eyes cannot see and your ears cannot hear and your mind cannot perceive because it is beyond the mind, thought, and comprehension. It is the meeting of the soul and the Spirit.

And therefore the idea of understanding the spiritual ideal is to attain to that state of being, of calm and peace and joy and everlasting happiness, which neither changes nor ceases to exist. It is to realise what it says in the Bible "be ye perfect as your Father in heaven." Those words do not tell us to be yet imperfect as everybody on earth! No, it means the idea of all perfection, all unity, no separation. It is the opposite of the idea that religion should keep part of humanity separate: do you belong to our church, our mosque, our temple? Patriotism for this particular sect or community, for this particular sacred book, for this particular teaching, for this particular "Truth." The source of all Truth is it not hidden in every man's heart, be he Christian, Mussulman, Buddhist or Jew? Is each not part of that Life which we call spiritual or divine? To be just this or that is the same as not to go further than this or that. The bliss found in the solitude is hidden within every human being; he has inherited it from his Heavenly Father. In mystical

words it is called "that all-pervading Light." Light is the source and origin of every human soul, of every mind.

The Sufi looks upon life as One Life, upon all religions as his religion: call him a Christian and he seeks to be that, call him a Muslim and he is that, a Hindu and he is that; call him whatever you like, he does not mind. It is not the thought of a Sufi to be called anything. Who calls him Sufi? It is not he. If he does not call himself something someone else is sure to find a name or him. Cats and dogs do not declare their names, it is man that gives them a name! If you call yourself "new thought" it will be made into the name of a new sect someday; if you call yourself "higher thought" that will be a sect one day; if you call yourself what you will—philosophy, theosophy, religion, mysticism, it is only the one thing, it is nothing but the constant longing of the soul of the human being. After experiencing all different experiences of life, the life of activity—it is the longing to attain to that state of peace or calm which seems to be the only object that in the end the soul wishes to achieve.

A person may keep thinking "perhaps I shall be happy when I am a king," or "rich." or "an officer" "then I shall gain my desire"—No. As long as he has not got it, the sweetness of the thought lies only in the Hope. As long as there is hope there is sweetness; after getting the desire the hope has gone. Then he hopes for something else. It is hope that is sweet, not the object. The object is never sweet. It is the sweetness of the hope that seems to make the object sweet. The whole sweetness is in the hope.

"If I could reach that height," he says. As long as he has not reached that height, the dream of reaching the height, of one day experiencing that position, experience or imagination, the dream of being comforted with it, so long as he has the sweetness of the hope. But when it has come it has finished. Then begins a new hope, always hoping, hoping, hoping.

And still, behind it all is that one inclination, common to all, the inclination of which he does not know the nature. No person would live did he not have the hope of something for which he is waiting.

Hope is the only food of life. Then the reason says, "yes, I am looking forward to my change from this place to the next; to get my inheritance some day; then I shall be all right; I shall be all right when I get that position, that house, that comfort." It is the thing he has before him, imagining, building, preparing and holding in the mind all the time, and yet when he does get it, there is another hope!

It is only those who are blessed by perceiving the origin and source of all things who awake to the fact that the real inclination of every life is to attain to something not to be touched or comprehended or understood. The hidden blessing of this knowledge is the first step to perfection. Once awake to this fact and the person sees there is something in life that will make him really happy and give the heart's desire. He can say "though there are many things in life which I need for the moment, and for which I shall certainly work, yet there is that One Thing, the only central Thing in Life, the spiritual attainment, the religious attainment (the attainment of God, you may call it, perhaps)—that will satisfy me." Such an one has found the key to all happiness, and has found that all things he needs will be reached because he has the key of all. "Seek ye; Knock ye." "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all things. . . ." This kingdom of God is the silent Life; the Life inseparate, eternal, self-sufficient, and all-powerful. This is the Life of the wise, whatever be the name given to it. This is the life which the wise contemplate. It is the Face of this Life that they long to see; it is the ocean of this life that they long to swim in, as it is written "we live and have our being in God,"

These are the ones who are really happy, are above all unhappiness, above the death and destruction of "life."

The Will, Human and Divine.

THE will is the same whether it be human or divine. The only difference is that in one aspect it is the whole, in the other aspect it is a part. In one aspect it is almighty, in the other it has only a certain might or a certain power. In the one aspect it is unlimited, in the other it is limited.

The difference between the human and the divine will is like the difference between the trunk of a tree and its branches, and as from the boughs other branches and twigs spring, so the will of one powerful individual has branches going through the will of other individuals. In a tree there is a trunk, and there are some prominent or large branches; from these there spring many branches. So there are the powerful beings, the Masters of humanity. Their Will is God's, their word is God's word and yet they are branches, because the trunk is the will of the Almighty. As the branches grow so we too grow, as the branches develop, we develop, as the branches flourish, we flourish, as the branches bear fruit, we bear fruit, as the branches are capable of rising we too rise. Whether the branch be large or small, every branch has the same origin and the same root as the stem. Therefore, whether a person be holy or wicked, wise or foolish, he has in his innermost spirit the same essence and the same power that the wise have. Therefore there is no reason for anyone to feel discouraged by his weaknesses or deficiences, or by his actions that have dissatisfied him, or by anything in life that has failed. He should forget the past that has failed him and begin to construct and mould his future as he would wish it to be. Considering that a branch is not separate from the bough, and the bough is not separate from the stem, so with all

our limitations we are not separate from the will of the Unlimited One.

In Sufi terms these two aspects of will are called Kaza and Kadar. Sometimes we think "If we could see that friend it would be so nice" and there comes a desire "if we could have some nice flowers." and a friend brings a bunch of our favourites. "We desire to have fish to eat, and the cook brings a savoury dish of fish! Sometimes this is due to the strength of one's own will, and sometimes it is the soul working in harmony with the divine will. One only knows when it is in harmony with the divine will and when not by noting the results, and the one who knows beforehand is the Seer. Some things are accomplished without the least effort. When it is the divine will it is like something floating on water, it advances without effort. Problems and actions may be achieved in one moment's time now, whilst at other times the smallest problem cannot be solved without great difficulty. In the case of some persons you find that they are very clever and experienced in industrial work or in politics; and they have striven very hard to attain their goal and yet have accomplished nothing. They are always a failure. And there are others who take up a thing and without much effort, without much worry on their part they have finished and attained their goal. All this is accounted for by harmony with the divine will. Everyone experiences such a thing as different times. When things are in harmony with the divine will, everything is there; you just cast a glance toward the thing, and it is found! As there is a saying "Word spoken, action done."

When we strive with all the material in our hands, and yet cannot achieve our desire, that is when the matter is contrary to the divine will. Our success or failure all depends upon the harmony or disharmony of our individual will with the divine will. (Rom. 13, 2.) But if our individual will is a branch of the divine will, if

its source is the same, how can it ever be out of harmony? At some times the hand sympathises with the foot, at other times it does not. We harm ourselves many times just because of disharmony; we may cut ourselves—our finger for instance. If then, I, who am one person, can cause harm to myself, and suffer thereby, why should it not be possible that the human will should be out of harmony with the divine, so that the divine suffers thereby? It *is* possible to act contrarily to the divine will, even though one is only a branch of the same!

In a fountain, there is a big stream which flows up and then breaks into many drops. The stream is as the divine will, and the different drops as the wills in us. One drop goes higher, another lower, one falls to the left, another to the right, one goes north, another south. But the source of all this activity is one; it is one thing that turns into so many, scattering into all directions. From unity there has come variety. The sages have therefore taught the part played by contentment. "Resist not evil" (Rom. 12, 21; Matt. 5, 39.), and yet how many give in to evil! The real meaning of the scripture is: suppose a person is angry with us, if we partake of his anger we resist him; the fire that he sets alight in our minds we allow to become alight in ourselves, and we have resisted. Do not resist evil in that way. Do not partake of the evil of another. If you are a quiet and calm person your calmness and quietness will make a greater effect on the other than his anger, so that true resistance is, "not to resist." All is learned by the *Law of Contentment*. Patience is the best quality that man can cultivate. We are always apt to become excited or annoyed because another person does not understand us. Why get excited if he *cannot* understand us? If a person is foolish or cannot do things right, by becoming excited we make him still more foolish, still more stupid. We cannot help him in that way and we partake his quality by allowing ourselves to oppose. If

we kept our mind tranquil, if we had patience, we would keep in harmony. Harmony is the greatest thing to learn in life. All the disagreement between couples, friends, people in business, and politics—all comes from lack of patience. If we just had patience and contentment we could teach ourselves much better.

Contentment teaches resignation. But this resignation is not exactly what people mean by "fate." The true recognition of fate is as the drop realising it is foolish to fight against the ocean. The drop is part of the ocean. Why want to fight it? If the drop does not resign itself, of what profit will it be? Why think that "what I think is right, and no-one can rightly think otherwise." We should remember that "another person does not see as we see," because each sees only a reflection of the highest Ego that works in man unconsciously to him. To him only, it is right, but to the view of the other it need not appear right. It is only right for the one person for that one moment! Later, it may not appear so. The limited being cannot claim the perception of the unlimited. Therefore we cannot regard our own will to be the universal will unless our will is harmonious with the will of God. We should therefore practice harmonising our will with that of our fellow-man—by tolerance, patience, endurance,—because in this world every Ego is working for self, however near or dear they may be. Everyone thinks "what can I make another person do for me"? He wants everybody to be harmonious to his way in life. Therefore there is a world full of rebellion, like the thorns in the rose-bush.

It may seem a great sacrifice and torment to do the other way, but it is *the only way* to get out of the whirlpool; it is the only way that one can conquer life's difficulties. If anybody has ever conquered, he has only done so by this means, never by the means of resistance, but always by the way of resignation. All teachers have taught this way, saying "Prostrate thyself on the ground, prostrate thyself before God;

kneel down!" Some of us neglect to appreciate this, but the messengers do not leave anything unspoken; it is we who do not understand what they say. People fight for their religions; if we were just to learn the *one* instead! The question should always be, have we learned *our own* religion? To have learned it means to practice and see its benefit. However you may try to run away from it, you will still find this lesson to learn. You have to make yourself strong and prepared to withstand all that befalls you. Therefore develop your will-power first by such morals and be able to harmonise your will with the others! One thinks he can develop will-power by fighting, but that is not so, because by fighting you make very little progress, by fighting with yourself you progress a hundred times more. Your greatest enemy is yourself. All weakness, all ignorance keeps you from the truth of your being, from all the virtues hidden in you and all perfection hidden in your soul. The first self we realise is the false self. Unless the will is born again it will not see the kingdom of heaven. The soul is first born into the false self; it is blind. In the true self the soul opens its eyes. Unless the false self is fought with, the true self cannot be realised. Therefore endurance is necessary, patience is necessary.

If we could fight with ourselves and make ourselves such as can give pleasure!

Sages are as harmonious to a pious person as to a wicked one, as harmonious to a wise as to a foolish, to a rich as to a poor. We feel friendly towards some, not towards others; we get along alright with some, but with others there is always disharmony. With some, everyone feels peaceful and happy.

The lions could not harm Daniel because of the harmony of his will with the universal will. The lions represent the destructive elements in the human mind! They represent wars, disappointments, rivalries, jealousies, envy, passions, and so forth, in different horrible guises. Our ego is the lion of lions, and if this is

conquered then these external lions—the different egos around us,—are conquered also, and wherever you go, foolish or wise, good or bad, with all you now have rest . ("No lion shall be there," Is. 35, 9.)

To learn the lesson of how to live is more important than any psychic or occult learning. Every day we think we have learnt the lesson, but if we knew it, the world would have become a heaven for us now. We may seek the higher knowledge or the higher things, but the very smallest thing, the control of all the creatures of the mind, seems as nothing to the higher knowledge, yet once learnt and acted would be greater than all. This is a great step. How difficult to gain this! How reasonless it seems! But when we pause to think of the ifference between ourselves and animals we see the greatness n this simple thing of yielding the will. If there is one animal in a place and another one comes to it, the first one wants to bite or bark or even drive him out of his sight. A dog will do that even though he has finished his dinner and does not want to eat the food that has attracted the hungry dog to the place.

There is an Eastern parable of a dog travelling to a certain town; his journey was a very long one, taking two or three days as a rule, and yet he arrived before sunset of the same day. They were all very surprised to see him so soon. (In India the dogs live together a great deal, without belonging to anybody in particular; this is possible because of the kindness the people show to them). "Yes, it is a very long journey," he said, "but I attribute my rapidity to the kindness and help of my fellow dogs. Since I left home, whenever I felt tired and tried to stop a moment to rest, four or five would run up and bark at me and want to bite me. So I had to run on without staying to rest in that place, or to search for food. And so it went on at every place I came to, until in the end I have arrived here at my destination." This illustrates the animal nature. Man's selfishness

shows itself in wanting to get the better of his fellow man. If we developed humanity we would do differently. We would be satisfied with a slice if there were another in need, but as it is, it happens that even when we are fed ourselves we do not wish anyone else to share the food. The human heart can only be satisfied by knowing that the other person is happy. True pleasure lies in the sharing of joy with another. From that day, we begin to act as human beings—and hitherto we have not done so even though we have human forms.

Sages have always repented of all things that make them animal. It is human beings that repent. It is the animals that are pleased with everything that they do. "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt. 3. 2). This has to be done all day long. Once realise that, and the kingdom of God is at hand. The sinner can become righteous at any moment if he makes up his mind; the difficulty is to make it up. The next thing is to carry it out. Revolutions, harmony; war, peace—all are parts of a whole being, but contentment and perfect resignation opens up a harmonious feeling and brings the divine will into harmony with our own. Our blessing now becomes a divine blessing, our words divine words, our atmosphere a divine atmosphere, although we seem to be limited beings. For our will becomes absorbed into the whole, and so our will becomes the will of God.

Mind,—Human and Divine

THE mind is not "brain," but that faculty, that untangible and perceivable activity of which the brain is merely a vehicle. Man limits things that are unlimited and beyond his power of measurement, and therefore he has pictured God in human form or given sacredness to the form of animals. A person of larger mind has a larger view, and perhaps sees God in everybody, whereas one with a mind always desiring to find some evil will be able to find a spot of evil even in a good person. That is, from childhood onwards, man is accustomed to measure and understand things from his way of understanding, and to examine in the limited way peculiar to himself.

"There is nothing new under the sun," said Solomon. People keep claiming to have found something new, but it may have been discovered and rediscovered a thousand times in days gone by.

The Vedantas, which represent the ancient philosophy of the Hindoos, using Sanscrit, the mother of languages, use the word manu or manushi for "man." Mana="mind." The English word "man" has the same origin. This shows that the origin of man's being is his mind; and his external form is so much before his eyes that it hides the other aspect of his being which seems, in comparison to this, as invisible. His body is here, but his mind may be in China; the real *he* is not here!

In the life of the Prophet it relates of his journey to heaven: "a heavenly animal came down to earth and took the Prophet to heaven." This means that the prophet has visited heaven in his mind. It is the state of mind which is heaven; it is the state of mind

which is hell; it is the state of mind that makes you great or feeble or insignificant, strong or weak.

In the Hindi writings, it says: "your success or failure depends entirely on your mind. If your mind has failed, no-one can bring success, and even if everything has gone wrong and your mind is in success, the success is there!"

The more we think of mind, the more we understand the nature of the human being. The tendency to sin or virtue, the temperament, the attitude to right and wrong, failure and success—all changes in life are entirely dependent on the condition of the mind. The dream tells the state of the mind at the time; the mind is in full play when the person is asleep. It is not free during the waking hours because of the occupations of the day. The dream will inform of the state of the patient's mind. A disturbance of the mind produces coma.

Whatever a man desires, that desire informs us of the state of mind he is in, and those who understand mind easily know the mind of another just by studying and knowing the desires and tendencies of life. The love of a rose, a lily, a jasmine, sweet, sour, salt, savoury things express the particular tendency of a person's mind, the mood in which he is. Modern education omits the study of the truth of unity from the nature of variety, whereas the sole aim of the mystic is to keep near to the idea of unity and find out "where do we unite?"

In the Arabic language it is written, "if you wish to know God, you must know yourself." How little man knows whilst he is in the intoxication of individualism! "I am a separate being; you are another; there is no connection between you and me, and we all have our own joys and free will." Did man but know how much his life is dependent not only on the objects and things that keep the body alive but also on the activity of a thousands minds in a day! Every time a man laughs it is the reflection of his mind,

controlled by the power of another person's mind. Why does he feel sometimes sad, sometimes glad, sometimes cheerful, sometimes enthusiastic, sometimes tired without reason, sometimes depressed and exhausted? We meet so many minds throughout the day and night, which are reflected on our own mind; and so the thoughts are changed, seemingly without reason, yet the whole activity of the life depends on these thoughts, and is changed according to them.

Who, then, can say, "I am an individual, independent and free. I can think what *I* wish, and I can do what *I* wish?" You are *not* doing what you wish; you are *not* thinking what you wish! There are various thoughts around you in the form of men and animals and individuals, who influence your mind and feeling and thought; you cannot escape them. No-one can escape being affected by the effect of another person's mind. There is always some person stronger than you and always someone weaker than yourself. We are connected with one another. Our lives are tied together and there is a link in which we can see one current running through all. There are so many globes and lamps and yet one current is running through all.

The mystic seeks to realise this constantly and impress it on his mind in whatever he may see. What, for him, are the waves of the sea? Are they in the sea? Their individuality is only so far as one wave rises and falls. It rises and falls, but it merges into the sea. The new wave is a different wave altogether. What, for him, is the Tree? There is one stem. The leaves spring from it, change their colour, and drop off, but at the same time, the life of the whole tree depends on the root and stem, and any damage done to either of these affects every branch and bough, every part of the tree. What, for him, is the Body? Eyes, nose, head—which of them is "self?" the hand has a separate name, the

fingers have a separate name; every part has a different name. Myriads of thoughts, myriads of imaginations, myriads of feelings! Can we ever number their variety? The different emotions, the different ways of sorrows, the different grades of joy—can we ever distinguish them or classify them? Our being has so many aspects, and what is it after all that calls oneself "I" "me"? It is one, not many. It is only that if we had no body or mind, we could not realise that we exist. Through all this variety one realises that "I am one."

It is the same things working further in mind till he finds that oneness which exists behind all these numerous names and forms, and in which he will unite with his Lord.

This shows that the experience of individuals, that is—the thoughts, feelings and knowledge of individuals—and the experience of the multitude of nations, of races, throughout all ages and periods of history, has not only belonged to individuals, to the multitude, to the nations, the races, but has always gone back till it comes back to that depth where it assimilated with what is called *divine mind*.

All different minds are the different leaves of one tree. Some minds are branches, some are boughs of the tree, and there is just the one source to which all are attached. Not one object or life can exist that has not one central point in which everything meets and joins together. And that meeting-ground is called "divine-mind."

The Brahmins therefore taught people to bathe at the point where all rivers meet; the purgation of life was by bathing at Sungam. Those who really understood it knew that this pictured the Divine Mind, and the purification in life lies in teaching that depth of life's sea by which the myriads of forms and names all join. The activity of all beings is directed from that centre. As the Quran says, "no single atom moves independently of the hand of God." That is, no

activity of any kind takes place either here or in the starry space without the impulse from within and from that depth of life where all minds and the effects of all activity unite.

Coming now to the moral side of the subject, we ask, "in what way should we carry on our life? Should we be satisfied to depend on one power working?" No. That would be just like paralysis of a part of the Body. The hand would not get up. Just think, where have your thoughts and impulses come from?

We may ask, "should we then realise every impulse that comes? Should we not take action in every case, seeing they come from God?" No, for it is the realisation of mind that makes things right or wrong, good or bad, spiritual or material. It is your own thought; not the action. It is as *you* make it. Although the impulse is from within, if it is wrong *you* have made it wrong; if it is right, it is because *you* make it so. The law justifies you. There is no other law. It is *your* law.

Whether a mind is stupid or wise, wicked or virtuous, every *mind* loves good and beauty. What is "good?" "Good" is that which is beautiful, which you admire, what you cannot help admiring. You admire the beauty of a person's kindness, beauty of action, feeling, and thought. Nobody tries to see ugliness or tries to follow the path of evil. Is there anyone who will say "please do not be kind to me," "please deceive me?" No one likes to be fooled.

Wickedness is to seek to gain and not to give; but the wicked person is still awake to beauty.

The mystic is guided by his own mind. That which we seek in life we must give to another; if kindness, give it; if goodness, give it; if service, give it. The whole secret of happiness in life lies in this. When we seek happiness in the kindness of another, it means that we depend on the kindness of another person to make us happy; and as long as we look on another to make us happy we keep expecting that which we

ought ourselves to have given. Not till then do we know what justice is.

The world is a dome, where every action is the echo of another. Do good—it will come back; if not from one person, it will come from another. That is the echo! You do not know from which side it will come; it will come a hundredfold more than you give.

Give love; will you get coldness? Do good; can you get evil? If you do good and judge your action and judge the action of another, you cannot be a judge until you are yourself selfless. Only then will Justice come to you. Only then will you understand the nature of justice. Self is the wall between you and justice. There is only one thing that is truly just, and that is to say "*I* must not do this." When you say this to *another* person you may be wrong!

The mystic develops his mind in this manner, purifying it by pure ("pure" means "freedom from sense of separateness") thought, feeling, and action—only following this one line of thought. Whatever differences in principles of right and wrong religious faith may show, no two individuals will ever differ in this one natural principle: "every soul seeks after beauty; and every virtue, righteousness, good action, is nothing but a glimpse of beauty."

Once having this moral, the Sufi does not need to follow a particular belief or faith, to restrict himself in a particular path. He can follow the Hindu way, the Moslem way, the way of any church or faith, provided he treads this royal road: that the whole universe is but an immanence of beauty. You are born with the tendency to admire it in every form and you may not blind yourself by being dependent on one particular line of beauty; you will not get it from another. You give it. You make yourself, your action, your thought beautiful, and let others get *your* beauty.

What is the perfection of mind that we have to touch? It is touched through contemplation, through

realisation and understanding of the one current running through the whole life. We begin to contemplate on that. The mind which we call in religious language "the Almighty," and in mystical language "the divine mind" is the depth of life, the depth of activity to which all activity and every activity is connected.

There is the whole religion. The mystic's prayer is to that beauty, and his work is to forget the self, to lose himself like a bubble in the water.

The wave realises "I am the sea," and by falling into the sea prostrates itself to its God!

"Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Will-power.

WHEN the mind enquires into the nature of will-power, it becomes a question as to whether it is a power of the mind, a power of thought, or a power of brain. Those who cannot see beyond the power of the brain, call it brain-power; those who cannot see beyond the mind, call it a power of the mind. Those who cannot conceive of the existence in man of anything above the feelings, consider will-power to be a power of feeling.

A Sufi understands it to be the Divine Power.

It is the divine will which is manifested throughout the whole universe, which has created the whole universe, and it is part of the divine will that manifests itself through us. Everything we do in life is governed and directed by that power. Were it not that there is but one power to govern and direct, how would it have been if one foot determined to go to the north, and the other to the south? Our two eyes might have turned in opposite directions, one to the west, the other to the east,—had there not been one will-power behind them to direct their gaze towards one object. When lifting a certain thing, one hand might have gone up and the other down, had there not been one will-power to govern both, and cause them to join in the one movement. This shows that each individual has one will-power which governs several organs of our physical existence as well as our thoughts and imaginations—all are directed consciously or unconsciouesly by the one power. We could not accomplish one thing in life had will-power not been at work.

But there are two ways in which the will-power works: (1) when it is lighted with the light of intelligence; (2) when it is not so lighted, but works by itself.

When it works by itself, we call it "accidental." We do things accidentally which we have not intended to do. But when will-power works and makes our mind and body work consciously, at such a time the light of intelligence is followed, and the will-power is acting consciously. This is the difference between the happenings and occurrences. In the one we are conscious of what we are thinking, we are conscious of what we are speaking. and of what we are doing—in porportion to our will-power and the light that is thrown upon it from the light of our intelligence.

We have acted without will-power when we have to say "I have done something I should not have done," "I have said something I should not have said," "I have thought something which I should not have thought." When a person says "the action I did is terrible," "I said something I should not have said" —during that time he said or did it, there was the will-power, but the strength and light of intelligence had not fallen upon it to the extent to which they should have fallen.

There are two parts in our being,—the will-power or governing power, and the vehicles—the mind and the body. These are each governed and con'rolled by that one governing power. In one a pect of our being we are King, in the other aspect we are minis er, and in a third aspect we are servant. We are minister when our mind works, and we are servant when the body works. We are King when the will-power works.

And when his power loses its control upon mind, then the thought become disordered, they dwell in any regions and on any lines such as our moral standard has perhaps not drawn for them. And our body also works disorderly when the power of the will is lost. Therefore all illnesses, all failures, all disappointments and faults in life are caused by just one thing—the weakness of will-power.

Man, not knowing this, sometimes considers the will-power to be a power of thought and mind. He

does not know that behind mind there is something. When the will is behind, the body is powerful too. Perhaps you have seen or heard of the Indian fakir who lifted an elephant. How can a man lift an elephant? However strong he was, what comparison can there be between the two? What power is at work? It was his will-power that was greater than the elephant's!

The great things in this world that man has done, and the wonderful things he has done in all this wonderful world that we see around us. are all the outcome of man's will. Animals, with all their strength, have not that will. Therefore, little man stands before the elephant and says "sit down," and the elephant sits down; "stand up," and the elephant stands up. With all the strength in its body, still the elephant listens to him. That is how the fakir lifted the elephant! He makes tigers work, lions, horses, he makes even his thought and will act through inanimate things. Even through objects can man's will-power be manifested. But when man does not realise its effect coming through living creatures, how can he experience his power through objects?

Jelalludin Rumi, in his book—Masnavi, speaks of fire, air, water, earth, ether, as beings, while man calls them things. To man they are things, to God they are beings, obedient servants. Whatever He wishes, that they do. As the servant acts according to his master's desires, so these elements act as God desires.

Further, not only does the will of God work through elements, but the will of man also—in proportion to the power of the will. A loaf of bread given with will-power can cure man's disease more successfully than a medicine, if there be enough will-power with it.

In the East, there are superstitions which have their mystical meaning. When a person goes out to a new business, or takes a journey, his relatives give him flour or rice in his hand, or some betel-nuts with the wish that he may meet with success. The thing itself is nothing. But behind it there is will-power;

and the persons who have received it have believed; and therefore they have responded to the will-power which has been attached to the gift. There is the harmony. The one who wishes to have good luck receives it.

The lesson of Christ can be understood after understanding this: it is the will-power which does the work. "If you have the faith of a mustard seed you can remove mountains."

In referring to such things, it is not to be inferred that man should be prepared to believe in superstitions or become superstitious. It is to show that he must know the value of will-power and use it in his profession, his business, his home, in all things. Would it not be a desirable thing to have will-power? would it not be desirable to have strength in the body? If we are satisfied with feebleness of body, it may be that we are also satisfied to be without will-power.

All light is for us, all inspiration is for us—why not use it as long as we know how to use it, to make the best use of life? If one wishes to abuse power, he may abuse bodily power, fighting everybody, boxing and wrestling. But that is another part of life. Power is necessary and should be developed; and when man is anxious to develop power either bodily or the power of the mind, he ought to remember that the will-power is behind it all; that if the will is developed, the physical and mental power can easily be obtained. The will-power governs the body and the mind.

Now coming to the question as to the will of man as opposed to the will of God, which is which? We understand the difference when we perceive that the nature of will-power differs only according to whether it is in its fullness or whether it is only limited. The will-power in its fullness is divine power; the will-power in its limited state is the indiviual will. And if there is anything that can be called the source of the whole creation, it is the divine will, it is the will of the Absolute Being. If you do not desire to call it "will,"

you may call it "force," "strength," or "might." But "force," "strength," "might," "energy," are all dead words. Force can be without intelligence, energy without intelligence, mind without intelligence; but will means force—energy—might—*with* intelligence! Therefore it is called divine-will instead of divine-energy.

A person with a materialistic mind would call it "energy." But why energy? Is your intelligence energy? It is beyond energy! Is your will only energy? It is energy with intelligence. Therefore divine will is energy, but with divine intelligence. In all, there is intelligence.

If we observe nature keenly, we see how divine wisdom is working. The animals and birds of tropical countries have furs and feathers which differ from those who live in the Himalaya and in cold places. They have suitable bodies, suitable skin, their life, their whole existence is so harmonious in the place where they live.

Man's desire, the desire of his senses, is met by the possession of every sense, every organ of sense, each suited to gratify the desire of the being. The eye meets the requirement of the sense of sight. With all our intelligence and great research no-one can make a new eye so adaptable and fitted for the purpose. This wisdom that makes us understand and believe that behind all this there is that intelligent God, intelligent Creator,—not only a life or energy or force—makes us ask why anyone should call Him force or "energy," and not "He," "God."

The light of the sun which we see, of the stars and planets is not their own! It is the light of the sun which illuminates the planets, reflects from them; it is the same light that they receive which they reflect. So it is with man. It is the will of God that is reflected in man. Although every star is not necessarily a sun, yet its light ultimately comes from a sun.

If man has divine light in him, why should he

commit sin or do evil, or why should there be anything that we call wrong or a sin? If it is God's will, how can such be sin? We understand this when we consider the difference between wrong and right, sin and virtue, good and evil; these differ with different people. It depends on the standard of each one's evolution; it depends on the goal or ideal which each one has placed before him. That is why the prophet said: "The religion of each person is peculiar to his soul." It is a great fault on our part when we accuse another person of an untrue or false belief, untrue or false religion. We do not know that perhaps he has a religion which is suited to himself. His evolution or attainment in life, his temperament, his standard of morals is different, therefore we ought (if we only could!) to keep to our religion. The standard that we believe for our good—that is quite enough.

Our intelligence and experience of this life on earth creates within us a world of experiences, and these experiences teach us by comparing one with the other: "this is for our happiness; this is not for our happiness." That which is for our happiness we call a virtue, and that which is not contributory to our happiness we call vice. In this way, the world which we make into our own is a world of personal experiences either in our own lives, or seen through the lives of others. Therefore it is quite natural that a person in Tibet should have a different religion from a person in France; and a person in Persia different from one in Colombo. Although mankind is the same everywhere, his religion is *his* experience in life, and therefore his own evolution, his own experience, added to the temperament of the people that he lives with. He can see what is good for him, and what is not; what is right and what is not right; what gives him happiness and what keeps him from it. The world itself becomes a scripture or book to the soul. If he does not consult it, he is thoughtless. But he that consults with the world that he has created within himself, he is wise.

Sometimes in his world he has decided a certain thing to be a sin or evil, and yet when it comes to an action or thought or speech, he cannot follow the directions he has already made in his world,—either because of the weakness of his mind or body, or because of the weakness of his will. He fails to fulfil the *law of his own world*, of his own scripture that he has written. Therefore he falls, and that is considered to be "sin" to him. It is the same with virtue. We have our own sins, our own virtues which we have made from our own experiences.

If a child throws a knife at anybody, he has not committed a crime because he has not yet set that action down as a crime in his world of experiences. He has not gathered it into that world. It only becomes a crime when he knows it to be criminal. After that he becomes responsible for his deed. "Judge not, that ye be not judged; with the same judgment ye judge, it shall be measured to you again;" you judge others according to *your* world of good and bad; the same world, the same scripture that is your religion judges you also. when you do wrong. And no-one would do wrong if his will-power helped him to do right, because how could he do wrong in a matter which the scripture of his own heart tells him to be wrong, had not his will-power failed him? Therefore those who repent after their crimes, faults and failures show thereby that it is not that they have wanted to do them but that their will power has failed them. The will power was not strong enough to help them to carry out their own standard of good as it should help all through the journey of life.

How can will-power be developed? Are there any *exercises* by which it can be developed? Are there any *Rules* to follow? Is there any *Knowledge* to acquire?

All three things are required.

What *exercises* would help the will-power to develop? The first exercise would be to check every act, word,

and thought which we do not wish to occur; to avoid unintentional actions, speech, and thought. The other exercise that is necessary for the development of the will-power is that of seeing that your mind does not rule you, your body does not rule you, but that *you* rule your body, *you* rule your mind, Desires such as appetite, thirst, sleep, even the desire of moving or standing or walking—all these desires must be under control. There should be a time in every day when every desire of the body is checked, and see if you can do it; and then as long as you let the body go without listening to it, so do. It is a great trouble to rule the body, for it is not willing to be ruled.

Yogis, fakirs, sufis may be seen sitting, standing in one posture for hours together. All the postures adopted are to control and govern every atom of the body, that it may be in the control of the will. I do not mean that one should devote all one's time to all these things, or even that one should have certain exercises for this. When one understands the matter, and carries it out in his everday life, then his life becomes a continual progress.

Control of the mind. The mind sometimes does not listen. We want to think of our business and perhaps the mind thinks of the state of our health or about a neighbour. It insists on thinking of something else. It may be as unruly as a savage horse which cannot be controlled.

The next step to gain control of it is by concentration, by absorption, by meditation. Concentration should be in every day life. It is necessary that our bodies and minds should act according to our will in our profession, in our office, in our ordinary life.

There is a tradition of the Brahmans that Rama had two sons, Lahu and Kusha. They went with their mother to a city, where they dwelt with a great hermit of the time. Lahu, a young lad, went out just to wander through the town and look at its beauty. To his great surprise he found a beautiful horse running

without a rider. And when he enquired whose horse it was, people said that this horse is let loose with the intention that anyone who can catch him may be crowned with a crown of kingship of this country.

This lad, with enthusiasm of growing strength and hope in life, thought "what a good thing it would be if I could catch this horse." So he ran after it and tried to catch it, but every time when he approached near the horse, it slipped away. Again he ran after it. And again when the horse was just a little distance away, he was just able to touch it, but again it slipped away. This went on for a long, long time. He was away so long that his mother became uneasy about him, not knowing whither he had gone. So she told Kusha that his little brother "has gone out and not returned." He goes out and discovers that Lahu is after this horse. He is very glad to note his brother's ambition. He knew however that he would never catch the horse unless he were instructed what to do. Finally, Lahu, knowing how to catch the animal, succeeded and was able to bring it before the authorities, who declared him a king.

This story tells us about will-power. The mind is just like a wild horse, and the will is the only thing which can catch it. The thoughts and imaginations are all so unruly that we cannot think or feel what we wish, if that were done by us, then neither could sorrow touch us again, nor could unhappiness come near—because it is the thoughts and imaginations which bring sorrow. If we could think what we wish to think, if we could feel what we wish to feel, life would be a heaven for us. When we do not feel what we wish to feel, when we do not think what we wish to think, is it just because of lack of will-power. That which is the governing power cannot hold it.

The elder brother of the story is the Teacher who shows the path to his younger brothers who are groping in darkness. He is sent with a message from God

(the father and mother of his children on earth) to guide his younger brethren:

Those who are seeking after the power to control this vehicle and have the ambition or desire to obtain the crown of life, to them will be granted the inheritance of the kingdom of their country.

Personal Magnetism.

EVERY one sees how great is the influence of personal magnetism upon the success of the every-day life (profession, business, family, and daily occupation.) Sometimes we notice that we go to a certain shop to buy a certain thing, and there is something about the manner of the salesman that impels us to decide to visit the same shop the next time we need that kind of article. Even if it is a long way to the shop we prefer not to go to one which is nearer. Similarly, sometimes it happens that a person goes to an hotel or boarding-house or restaurant, and some person treats him in such a way that he decides to return to that place rather than visit another. So with doctors, solicitors, barristers, scientists, professors, and teachers of all kinds. A doctor may be well versed in his knowledge, he may have a great many degrees, but if he lacks this personal magnetism, instead of curing patients he may make them still worse! Sometimes a doctor cures the patient before giving him the prescription—just by a word of kindness, by a manner, a tenderness, a sympathy. He makes the patient feel so much better that the disease, which was before too much to bear, appears to be able to be cured after all. Half the pain has gone with just seeing the doctor. Such a difference does personality make. It is a great healer.

Then there may be a solicitor or barrister who horrifies his client as soon as he sees him, and so he does not wish to go to him next time. Another person will impart courage and hope; his personality, his speech, everything, will show that he is the man to follow, to go to for help.

In family life, many times disagreement arises for the same reason, or agreement arises for the same

reason. The father, mother, husband, wife, have had personal magnetism which can hold. When this magnetism is lacking, a person finds it better to be among friends than to be with a relative. A person would rather go out than stay at home. The home becomes a strange place because there is not that magnetism which the person lives for. It is as if in midwinter a person comes to his room and finds it so cold, because there is no fire there; he wishes that he were somewhere else where there is a fire.

Personal magnetism can create beauty around one, can attract one, can make a person attractive to his fellow-man, serviceable to his fellow-man. It is soothing. It is healing.

What is personal magnetism? Is it a development of psychic power or occult power? Is it an education or is it refinement?

The answer is that education helps personal magnetism because knowledge is light and light is beautiful, and it always helps. But this is not personal magnetism. People may be very educated and at the same time very disagreeable. Sa'di says that an educated man without practice is like a donkey loaded with books, he is carrying them on his back but he does not know it or act accordingly. He has a load of knowledge which serves no purpose. If his education has not made a man human, what is the use of education? it is just learning, available for earning money with.

You may think that if it is not education, is it psychic power? It is not necessarily psychic or occult power, it is the natural psychic power, the natural occult power that we call personal magnetism. It is not necessary to attain psychic or occult power by a certain practice or study; one should already have that power; it is when it is used beautifully that it *is* personal magnetism.

Then is magnetism politeness? is it polish? As polish is the fashion of to-day, every person learns it when he mixes among people. One puts on a new

dress to go among the people of her circle; another wishes to show himself so polite (carrying round the tea-cups, cakes, etc). But this is not necessarily personal magnetism, though he may think he has a winning manner.

If there can be any real explanation of personal magnetism it is the making of one's own person into that which one expects from others. Man usually makes the mistake of expecting from others and not doing it himself. For instance, a man is very pleased if he is well received in a friend's house, very pleased if spoken kindly of, if he is attended well, when his vanity is satisfied by the action of others. He is very glad if others have a good opinion of him, and overlook his defective qualities. But seldom does *he* pause to be otherwise himself.

If we only tried to give to others all the things we demand from them, if we overlooked their bad points instead of expecting them to overlook ours, if we only thought "How inconsiderate I was at that time when I spoke so rudely to ———". If we only gave to others all that we would wish them to give us, all that we are pleased for them to give us, *that* creates a personal magnetism. If all things that we expect from them, if we did *that to* them!

The word "gentleman" in the English language is a very good one in this respect. It has come to refer merely to the dressing well. But the ideal behind it is good. It is the ideal of gentleness, and gentleness is the essence of personal magnetism. There cannot be a better lesson than that given in the Bible where it is said, "Blessed are the meek, blessed are the poor in spirit," but the difficulty is that man gives little attention to all these things; he thinks they are too simple. And at the same time if you ask him the meaning of "poor in spirit," he will find it very difficult to answer. It is not many who will know what that means. It is seen by comparing the spirit of man with the spirit of an animal. If the tiger is

sitting in a place and you want the tiger to get up, he will say "Boh." If a man is sitting there and you say "will you please let me sit there," he will say "certainly," because his spirit is poorer than the spirit of the tiger. And such is the difference between a man and a gentleman. The gentleman is he who shows the poorness of spirit in himself, a spirit of accommodating another; if he has a place, letting another sit there if he wants: "It does not matter if another person sits in my place; it is still better." There is one person who, if you talk roughly to him, gives back your words four times more heavily and coarsely than you. There is another person who, if you talk roughly to him, withstands it and perhaps does not give an answer at all, or perhaps he understands and consequently avoids a fight or quarrel in his search for peace. As it is written, "Blessed are the peace-makers." It is not merely the kind of peace which prevents fighting and bloodshed and strife; we may make this kind of peace many times from morning to night. There are a thousand matters about which we can quarrel and get annoyed with one another. So throughout our daily life, at all times, there are opportunities of making peace.

We always admire a person who shows gentleness in his movements, in sitting, walking, in his voice or words, in his thought. We admire it consciously or unconsciously. There is always a charm in gentleness, and yet man neglects it when the time comes to practice it. That which should come first comes last. If only man thought "How I like gentleness on the part of others;" if a person has gentleness of voice or expression or word, it is so charming, so winning; we know this so well and yet we always forget it at the critical moment!

The poorness of spirit comes from meekness. Meekness is mildness, which is contrary to what we call roughness. Roughness of action or roughness of speech is contrary to mildness or meekness. Our eyes

naturally always enjoy mildness of colour instead of striking colours because of the aggressive power in the latter which our eyes cannot bear. We experience the same thing in the sun and moon. We do not like to look at the sun, but in India we enjoy the moonlight nights so much; one wishes the moon shone every night. Why? because it is mild; it shows meekness. Our power is the power of light, our strength of speech, thought, action is of the same kind and the same nature as the light of the sun and moon respectively. If the light be too strong it irritates; if it be mild it soothes.

If you treat everyone with gentleness, your personality is always welcome wherever you are. The same gentleness in your speech always gives you success, and always means friends for you. If we only had control of our words; if our words were always of that meek nature!

Among the musicians and poets of the East, there is especial attention given to education in meekness and mildness. And there is a Sanskrit saying that "Art becomes twice graceful when there is the art and mildness together." How true it is! When you have admired the art of the artist, "How beautiful it is," *he* says "Oh, it is nothing, it is your kindness that causes you to have admired it." His magnetism becomes great.

From king down to the most ordinary person, it is mildness that wins the whole world. People of all positions in life, and of all grades of evolution can do such a great work with this one little possession. Sa'di said "If your word is sweet, you conquer the world." Wherever you go, you win men's hearts. Is it not the meaning of the words of Christ when he says to the fishermen: "Come with Me; I will make you the fishers of men," that is, "I will teach you those manners of humanity by which you will win everyone you may come in contact with." Do you think a person can become a fisher of men by his cleverness, by his artificial polish? False is false. Gold is gold.

The true gold will last. The false gold will lose its brilliance. Polish is just like false gold. A person may wish to win wife, husband, father, brother,—all by his cleverness, by his polish,—but he proves to be false on a very little occasion. Polish may please the eyes, but it cannot please the heart. One can polish one's actions, but one cannot polish one's heart. The polish of the heart comes from the feeling. The action of the heart is not harmonious with the roughness of the feeling, for feeling will come out; all that is real will come out; the polish is only beautiful for a moment. It may prove a person to be very gentle and clever for a moment, but it does not last. His friends will leave him in a short time. The relatives will all in time know that it is just external, all cleverness, not that which will last for ever. It is the truth that lasts for always, all the beautiful qualities should be true qualities, not false, because the value lies in the true and not in the false.

In the ancient times, people of great family, royal families, princes, people of educated and religious families used to go out into the world and were not recognised as such because there was no international communication in those days. No nation knew its neighbour. Yet it has always happened that these persons were always recognised by their manner, recognised as belonging to such a family.

Evolution has made all humanity a family, and now is the time when every individual should consider that as a member of the family of the whole humanity he ought to show himself as human in nature, and how superior he can be to the animals and the lower creatures. The things that animals do, if we also only ate, drank, slept, bit each other, got the better of one another,—if we only did that we should not do anything great. Their whole life goes in being ever in pursuit of their bread. In the night, animals join together and make noises in the jungle. If we also enjoy ourselves in that way then

our amusements and joys and comforts are not greater than those of animals, unless we show some quality in our personality which animals do not possess.

A Hindostani poet, Amir, says "it is much more precious than any wealth to collect the wealth of good manner," because by good manner we can make another person so kind as our own father and mother, another person as kind and sympathetic as our own brother and sister; another person as respectful as our own son and daughter—if we only have that manner. If we know how to be motherly, how to be fatherly to our younger ones, if we know how to behave respectfully towards our elder ones, if we know how sympathetic and polite and good we ought to be to those who are poor, or servants, or depend on us, if our manner were beautiful there is no heart we could fail to win. The children of the wealthiest people may, owing to the ill manner of the parents, want to sacrifice all their fortune, their father and mother,—in order to go away from them. They would even sacrifice life itself. As with children so with less near relatives. They cannot attract as long as they have no good manner. All the physical magnetism passes away. During youth he may be very magnetic, but when his youth passes away his attraction is lost. But the attraction of personal magnetism grows with years, and can be used at all times. Even an old man is attractive, so that people will say "What a nice person. By going to him we can feel so filled with joy and comfort."

Although the nearest and dearest will not always desire to spend time with an old person, they find themselves attracted to an aged one who has personal magnetism.

The Koran says "God is beautiful, and He loves beauty." What is beautiful in life? It is not only trees and plants and flowers and the external physical world. The higher beauty is the beauty of personality. By the beauty of personality our heart is

filled with joy, by the beauty of nature only the eyes are satisfied. The heart is not satisfied. It is the beauty of personality that fills our heart with joy; there is something imparted to us which we cannot explain. Animal magnetism passes away with the strength of the animal. The animal beauty all goes when the person is ill and his physical energy is lost. There is no longer any attraction.

Personal magnetism helps in all conditions. If a person is poor, it makes him rich because his personality is such riches that he receives the attentions, the service, and all his life's demands with less trouble, even in spite of his humble position in life. Do you not see round you how a person of beautiful personality, however helpless, will always attract the good, the bad and all around him? A person that lacks it, however rich, however educated, however great in position (perhaps his *position* will attract those who are forced into his society) will only attract such as are looking to see if they can get some of his wealth. His relatives, forced to go before him, only long for the time when *he* is not, but his *wealth* is theirs!

Let us think about the prophets. There are so many followers of Christ in the world to-day, and perhaps it is true that not everyone understands His teachings and follows Him because of His *teaching*. But if there is anything of Him which *is* known to the world, if there is any of His fragrance left in the world, it has been His personality! He was ready to forget and overlook the faults of others, he was ready to attend to the service of the poor, ready to play and be equal to little children. It was not "I am a teacher from God and people must come to bow before me."

That then is the attitude. The poorness of spirit, the harmony in life; the harmonious temperament.

From the highest to the lowest we always find people in a state of disharmony. In clubs, associa-

tions, meetings, institutions, libraries, parliaments,—all will dispute and fight. This teaches us that however evolved a person may be in his education, his position, or his power or wealth, he has not mastered the

LAW OF HARMONY.

Whoever has mastered the law of Harmony has developed Humanity within himself. He will harmonise equally with the wise and with the foolish. It is not because he is wise that he harmonises with the wise, or because he is foolish that he harmonises with the foolish. Foolish men gave their lives for Christ; wise men worshipped Him for His wisdom. "They left their nets" and the fishing, where they had spent all their lives: because Christ harmonised with them; He answered their questions; He was tolerant!

So with the story of Krishna. He is looked on as the incarnation of God, one of the greatest teachers the Hindoos had. He was a child with little children, was a cowherd with every cowherd, was harmonious with everybody; was wise among the learned and was merry among the happy. He was not a king; He was not poor; He was one among all. The young and the old—everybody loved him. When He played the flute the cows and the deer and all the animals of the jungle would come to listen. It was not the mere skill of His music, because music is not attractive if the personality is not attractive. It was His personality that was attractive.

There were two friends speaking together, and one said, "that funeral which is passing is of a person who is going to heaven." Another funeral, passing later, caused this friend to remark "This person, for him the place is hell!" The younger of the two friends asked, "What do you know about it?" "Oh," she said, "it is so simple—behind the first one were some people walking with tears in their eyes, and they all looked so sad. So he must have

won their hearts by his personality. His magnetism must have made such an impression that all the people appear sad and sorrowing. And the other funeral, with that there were few people, and they were laughing in their sleeves and winking, and everybody had a smile, which shows that they were very pleased to get rid of him!''

Whatever possession, whatever power, whatever honour, whatever wealth, whatever belongings, whatever property, we have,—nothing is of any use in the end, for all is passing. But if there is any one thing which is worth gaining in life, because it lasts for ever, it is Humanity!

Love, Human and Divine.

LOVE is considered to be sacred, whether it be human or divine,—according to the view of the mystics, philosophers and thinkers. That it is possible so to regard it is shown by the fact that, in its root it is beyond both the human and the divine. As it is written in the Bibile, "God is love,"—three words which open up an un-ending realm for the thinker who desires to probe the depths of the secret of love.

In ordinary life we make the meaning of this word into affection for our surroundings, for our relatives, or our beloved, but when we think deeply about it we see that from start to finish it represents the power underlying the power of all activities and all intelligences. When we study life from the material stand-point we see there are four different stages,—the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal and the human. And of these four domains it is said by a Dervish, "God slept in the mineral kingdom, He dreamed in the vegetable kingdom, He woke in the animal, and He realised Himself in the human." And this gradual progression shows to us that underlying it there is a sense of life which has expressed itself in every step towards the completed development of love.

In the *mineral kingdom* we find no tendency toward love. But, as the intelligence develops—in the *vegetable kingdom*—we feel that sympathy is reflected from us into the flowers. The plants perceive and feel that which comes from us. A loving person may attend to plants and rear them and water them with love and sympathy; and they flourish so much! But, in the hands of another, it may not be so. If we

only watched plants closely we should see how much they feel our presence and our love. They flourish according to our love; the more love we give, the more fragrance, the more sweetness. Man is always working in the farms and gardens, thinking them material things, looking to see how plants can be helped by material means; if he could only believe it there is a still higher means of helping them to grow, a spiritual means,—the use of love and sympathy!

There is a story in the East; of Puran Bhagat who was once living in exile in the forest, and after a long time during which he had developed the true love in his thought and feeling and spirit, he returned to his country. The first thing he wished to do was to sit in his garden which had gone to ruin during his absence. He went down to it in the guise of a sage, and began to water it with his little water bowl. The garden at once began to flourish, and in a short time it became such a miracle of beauty that every one in the city began to talk about it and say "this must be some spiritual man, since the garden begins to grow and flourish." The touch of the saints and sages and prophets made things grow.

Every kind of power lies in this one thing which we call by the simple name love. Charity, generosity, kindness, affection, endurance, tolerance and patience. All these words are from one; they are different names of the different aspects of the one thing, love. Whether it is said "God is love," or whatever name is given to it, all the names are the names of God, and yet every form of love, every name for love, has its own peculiar scope, has a peculiarity of its own. Love as kindness is one thing, love as tolerance is another, love as generosity is another, love as patience is another,—and yet from beginning to end it is just love. It is love's different manifestation into different directions, which distinguish themselves differently and have different purposes.

According to the Sufi metaphysics, love has two

different aspects, jelal and jemal; and each aspect of love has its peculiar sphere. The jelal of love is the power of love. You may call it psychic power, will power or power of mind; yet it is one power working through different channels. And this is the power of love; its power manifests and acts according to its force. Its force is greater when it is unlimited and less when it is limited. That which is called imagination, thought, perception, conception, inspiration and intuition, comes from the Jemal aspect of love.

In the third stage of evolution, which is called the *animal kingdom*, love is still more manifest. The animal is more capable of perceiving and feeling our love and kindness, our pleasure and displeasure. When you enter a house the dog may be delighted, or he may recognise your displeasure and feel depressed; cats recognise our love and so also do parrots and other pet animals of different kinds. Thus we see that the cat is vexed because another cat comes into the house, and we read how, when Joseph was in the well, it was a dog that brought him bread from a neighbouring town, and fed him during the time he was in the well. And in Arabic stories we hear the story of an Arab who was protected and guarded by his horse when he fell wounded on the battle field; the horse became his protector.

In *man*, love can develop more, though sometimes man proves to be not only worse than animals but even more dead to love than a rock. You would wish to be with the rocks rather than with such men. This is because he has developed selfishness with his evolution. He is more selfish than any other creature in the world unless he wipes off the impression of selfishness from his heart.

It would be no exaggeration for me to say that why man cannot achieve occult and psychic power and the intuitional and inspirational faculty is because he has not developed the power of love; and the reason

of this failure is that selfishness has kept him back from developing the power of love.

Man does not differ from animals in his passions and emotions. The human being differs from animal by his human qualities; these are not eating, drinking or seeking its kind. Human qualities can only be developed by the development of love. Man has fought in all ages with his brother-man on account of differences of religion, differences of faith, differences of belief, differences of church, differences of belonging to another community he has worked with, not knowing that each religion each time it was given, has only brought a message of love, taking different expressions at each time of its delivery. It has been given in different ages and to different people; they have received it according to their evolution, and yet there has been really only the one teaching—that of developing love. "Love your neighbour," "love your fellow man," "love your enemy,"—there has always been the same lesson given!

Christ told the fishermen "come and I will make you fishers of men": that is, "as fishes come into your net, so your heart full of love will become a net which will attract every man to it!

Rumi says "all who see me feel attracted to me, yet not knowing what it is in me that attracts them." Is it not the secret of the whole life? If we could see to whom we are attracted in life—father, mother, sister, neighbour, or anybody that we feel attracted to —then it would seem to us to be the magnetic power or psychic power. But there is no greater magnetic power than the power of love. Its magnetic power is very great. It changes a person's voice, his heart, his manner, his form, his movement, his activity—everything becomes changed. What a difference between water and rock; that smoothness and that liquid state of its being, the rise and fall of the surface of the water compared with the rigidity of the rock!

The great teachers of humanity become streams of

love. It is the first sign of the sage or man that he becomes love himself. His voice, his feeling, his presence,—everything makes you realise that there is something open in him which we do not find in everybody; this something is his deep love.

The development of love is many times hindered by different obstacles in life; the first obstacle is ourselves. We begin our life with selfishness and all that we want is for self, and if there is a tendency to love, it is for one's own happiness, and one's own joy.

When the question comes "how much do you love me, and how much do I love you," it has come to be a trading in love. "I love you but you don't love me" is to say "I have bid so much and I expect a return of love." This is trading in love. Trade cannot lead anywhere because trade makes you think of the self, and love is beyond that. To love is to give. It is not to take at all! The true lover never speaks of what he has done for his beloved, because he loves for love's sake, not for the sake of a return. If a person begins to love and makes it a love fed by the love of his beloved, then he seeks an impossible thing. If a person keeps waiting for the love of the beloved, he is bound to find that nature cannot grant that desire,—unless both are traders in love. Each takes the best of the other. Each may think he loves, but neither truly loves. Love teaches the lover patience, forbearance, gentleness, because he thinks "my beloved will be displeased, I will be as gentle as possible in my action and in my movements." These thoughts are a correction to the lover. With every such thought that passes in the life of the lover he corrects himself. Hope is the only thing in life which keeps us alive, because it feeds on love. Patience is fed by love. We can never have patience with anybody without love. How valuable is patience! "Oh patient ones; O blessed with patience," is the Divine Voice of ALLAH in the Koran.

Another *hindrance to love* is where it depends on the

beauty of the ideal—be it physical beauty, beauty of thought, of character or of personality—whatever beauty it may be, whenever love depends for its continuance or for its existence upon the beauty of its object, it must some day fail. Therefore true love does not regard the body, the external object. Properly speaking, love p epares its own ideal. To take an instance, "Oh!" says a person, "I have loved you for your beauty"; what will he say when youth has gone and the beauty is lost? where will the love be then? The love will change too! And if the love has gone with the passing of the beauty of the object of its love what then? In another instance he may say, "Oh, I love you for your personality," and yet perhaps within a month the beloved may not show the same personality, the same attractive goodness! what then? We think a flower is a fleeting thing, so soon does it change. And yet the human heart is liable to a quicker change than even the flower. A person may be very good one moment, very kind; and at another moment the contrary,—calm at one moment, at another restless,—at one time so affectionate, at another different,—all according to the state of mind in which he happens to be at the time. So it cannot last if it is allowed to depend on the beauty of the ideal. Such love is dependent and would sooner or later die. That is why so many hearts cannot keep the flame of love alive in them. So often does it happen that just for the lack of the understanding that love must not be for an external ideal, that the lover is to prepare the ideal in himself, the lovers grow cold; they have failed to make the self-sufficient love within themselves. Not so the sages, the holy men, the wise ones. *They* know that a person who is kind to-day *can* be the contrary tomorrow. Therefore the wise lover expects both opposites in the external and inner beauty of the Beloved.

Those who have developed the ideal love within

themselves by the aid of an object to love, transform their nature into a more and more loving one in time. Their love for a certain person is akin to learning the A.B.C., for by learning the A.B.C. you come to be able to read not only the primer but any book that comes to you. By learning to love one, you gain a light, a torch, by the light of which you can read all things in life. It is as if in your nature you have developed something that you can give to everyone.

In the East, there is a saying that "a loving son is always a loving husband." This is a true philosophy. It teaches the fact that he who has known from the beginning of life what love means has laid the foundation of a whole life of being truly loving. A person who is faithful and kind to one friend can be kind to all, acquaintances, servants, neighbours and strangers alike, because he has developed in him that quality. But when people pretend to love, they are kind to one and bitter to another. This shows that they are really not lovers. The real lover will show his kindness, gentleness, sympathy,—all aspects of love—to every one he meets.

When we think about occult powers (knowing the condition of other's minds, their pleasure and displeasure, also the joy and pain of another's heart, knowing what is going on at a distance, receiving news from far away in the world)—all these are gained without study, just through the power of love! It is all so easy and simple to one who loves. Not the traders with love can know this. The real lover will know such things without special meditation or concentration, for what can exert a greater concentration than love. If one's thoughts are scattered over pianos, chairs, tables, jewels, dress—one cannot understand such power, but if one has an interest in an ideal the power is there before you seek it.

Therefore all the occult and psychic power is the power of love. But it is not only a matter of love for a living person. There is a love for art, for science, for

music, for poetry, for all the different aspects of beauty. Love in every direction shows you the sublime vision of the beautiful. It is those that have loved the beauty of poetry that are able to enjoy its beauty and to express it to others, those that have love for music that are enabled to give their music to the world and attract the lovers of music, as well as being able to enjoy its beauty themselves. Love's power ever shows its magnetism afresh through all the ages.

But love in its higher sense teaches us that there is a love, an object, a Beloved, that can last with you and prove satisfactory, to compare with which there is nothing else in life worthy of all our love:—and that one object is GOD! But among those who say "Oh yes, I love God," very few tell the truth; many times that is a false pretence. How can you love the Formless and Colourless? It is impossible to love one whom one cannot circumscribe within any particular beauty. It is only those who pretend to be spiritual because they are godly and pious toward one of their own sect that say "we love God." It is as absurd to say this as to say to a beloved "oh beloved, I love you very much, but I do not like to look at your face." For God says "I have made man in my own image." When man is prejudiced against man and still says "I love God," how can God be pleased with that kind of love? How can that be true love for God which refuses to see the beauty that is before it? It would be as if God said, "if you wish to see Me, see Me in the face of Man. That is My own image." It would be also as if a person claiming to love an artist were to say to him "I love you very much, but I cannot bear to look at your picture." What kind of love could that be? The artist has given all his soul and life to that art, his very self, so to speak, has become art, and his whole satisfaction lies in your appreciation of his art. How can those claim to love the Creator who do not love His created?

For God could never have become known had there been no manifestation. So he cannot pretend to love God who does not find sufficient beauty to admire in His manifestation.

So too, if one limits one's love to a single object, saying, "I only love this and there is nothing else I need," surely he has not a right kind of love either. True love is limitless. Though it begins by being limited in such a way yet it progresses, and some day breaks out. Such a thing is constantly happening in life, but people do not understand the psychic law which underlies it. Eastern people say, when someone loves another person intensely and does not care for anyone else, "there will be some mishap there some day." There is always some breakdown, some danger awaiting, some trouble in the future, when the love is not being allowed freedom of flow. It is being limited. The Japanese and Chinese have called God jealous because He does not allow two persons to be devoted to each other. God cannot tolerate this narrowing of love. If one tried to put the whole sea into a little jar, the sea would break it. The sea of love breaks its limited channel. To speak of the jealous God is to mean that the unlimited force of love cannot allow its expression to be directed towards one limited object. That is how it is that the love of God alone is the culmination of love, for love is as vast as God. Verily love is itself God.

There is a beautiful story which has been dramatised and acted in India for hundreds of years; the people will never get tired of seeing it acted, so it is acted even to-day. It is called "The Court of Indra." Indra is the God of Heaven. His court is made up of devas and peris. The latter dance in the court, the devas are to attend the pleasure of Indra. No earthly creature is ever allowed to enter, nothing of the earth is ever seen or allowed in the court of Indra. Once a Peri (the Green Peri) happened to fly on to the surface of the earth, and she saw a prince of that land, over

which she was flying, whose beauty charmed her so much that she thought that if she could in some way or other take him to her high dwellings she would be happy. She told one of the Devas about it, and he carried away Gulfam the Prince while he was asleep. He wakes up and finds himself in a strange place, and breathing a different air. After great bewilderment he sees a Peri, a creature much more beautiful than the creatures of the earth. He looks at her and asks her how he came to be there. She tells him he is in Indra-loka, that she loves him and will be happy to keep him there. "I will do anything for your happiness she says." Gulfam forgets all about his kingdom, and lives with the Peri, most happy in her love. Every day she has to leave him to be at her duty, and every day she returns, never saying whither she goes. This arouses his curiosity, but still she will not tell where she goes and what she does. Finally she does tell him,—that she has to dance before Indra every day. Then he wants to go and see! She expostulates, but at length consents to take him. She has him behind her, and hopes to conceal him with her wings as she dances before Indra. But one of the Devas discerns him and tells Indra, who will not for a long time believe it possible that a human being could be in his court. Then he discovers him, and pronounces a curse upon him, while the Peri is to be banished until she shall have undergone the successive stages of purification through earth, water, fire, air and ether. Not till then can she be allowed to enter the heavens again.

The story shows that in the highest dwellings where love takes man, which is Indra Loka, in that sphere the King is Indra, the perfection of Beauty. The highest love must be for God; it belongs to Him. In its development love should aim toward that ideal. Peri is the human soul, Gulfam is the human body. The soul which is heavenly, becomes interested in this earthly body, and when by the power of

love it comes from the earthly body to the heavenly sphere, it is bringing to heaven an object which is only destined to be on earth. The love of a limited being is not allowed to remain in heaven and will be condemned to be purified and uplifted until it can nevermore find satisfaction in a limited object, in the love for a human being. Homage must be paid to the Lord of Heaven. True love must have a free flow; and for that free flow the teachers have taught us to learn to love from the limited, and thence to advance in love till we attain to the love of God, the Unlimited.

Intuition.

INTUITION is a part of knowledge that is beyond man's personality, and above the knowledge of things and means which he has. It comes at times when man becomes passive, and he exposes himself to that knowledge, consciously or unconsciously.

There are some who are more intuitive, and there are others who are less, and if you study the nature of their character, you will know the nature of their intuition. Those who are confused, who are constantly hurried, who are changeable in their nature, who have the fear of death, of disease, of their own action, of their enemies, of their surroundings; those who have constant doubt ("can I trust this person?" "that?"; "that friend may or may not prove worthy" and so on)—it is all these who have less possibility of possessing intuition. Those who can trust without troubling themselves much more, those who have few doubts, such are usually clearer in their perception. Those who trust in the inner guidance, who understand the secret of the instinct that works through animals and all creatures, those who are pious, those who wish to walk in the light always prefer the right way of thinking and speaking and acting. It is these who experience intuition many times in life.

Intuition is the first step. Inspiration is the second and revelation is the third. When revelation begins, it has arisen from intuition, for intuition is the first stage.

Its way of manifestation—how does intuition take expression? Intuition is of two kinds: (1) it comes without intention, without being invited. (2) it comes when you ask yourself a question.

In the first kind, a person may be sitting down, and the thought comes to him that a danger is awaiting him; in what it may way occur he does not know, he just feels it. Next day he finds that something was going to face him. He sometimes thinks that some happiness is coming from a friend, that such an one from whom he has been parted for a long time is going to come and see him; sometimes he thinks an enemy is going to turn into a friend—and yet he has not been thinking of the subject previously; the thought comes to him suddenly. It proves real, it proves right. Without enquiry, a thought comes to you which tells you of a coming event. People sometimes take this to be a "spirit communication"; sometimes they take it to be a thought-transference from some one else (both things are possible). But intuition is a greater and higher thing than a spirit-communication or thought reading, because it is pure; it is your own property; it belongs to you. In this you do not depend on a spirit or upon another person sending a thought to you. In this you are perfectly independent. You receive the knowledge from within, which is far superior, and greater and higher.

The second variety of intuition is that concerning which there is a little different thought in the Bible. We read "knock at the door, and it will be opened to you." Matt. vii. 7. Knocking at the door is asking within one's own self, "What will become of this particular business or aim or object that I am thinking of?" As soon as you knock at the gate of God (which is your heart), from there the answer comes, and it is a truer answer than any other person can give. There is no-one who can know about our life, affairs, objects, motives, as much as we do ourselves! And therefore nobody can advise us better than ourselves.

Mankind cannot understand this secret, and consequently begins by depending on the advice of

another. This would be advantageous if it were possible to have the good fortune of having a better advisor.

Sometimes the person from whom advice is asked is foolish, sometimes he is an enemy, sometimes he himself is in a confusion and cannot advise. Therefore they are keeping themselves from their real and true advisor—the guiding faculty within.

Intuition begins in the form of "impressions." As soon as you see a person you have an impression of that person, his face, his features, his expression, his atmosphere has in a way made an impression on you—as to his goodness or his righteousness, his wisdom or foolishness, his being useful or not, his being displeased with you or not, his being your friend or enemy, whatever condition there may be—you receive it without any other source that these are his feelings. According to your own openness of spirit do you get your impressions. You receive a kind of impression whether you will be successful in your business or not. All these impressions convey to man that his intuition is beginning. That is the first step.

After having intuition with individuals in respect of their relation to yourself, the next step is intuition with respect to those activities in which another person is telling you of his projects, you have an impression of whether it will be successful or not. You cannot give a reason for it; or even if you say the reason, as you utter the reason you become aware that that is *not* the reason! For as soon as you begin to think it out, you at once descend from the higher pedestal, from the spiritual source of information. To try and prove the basis of the truth of its spiritual source by means of reason, that is to use the thing of earth to establish the thing of heaven! A proper reason for an intuition cannot be given.

The source from which this knowledge comes is not reason! People who are very good at reasoning can

go on fighting all their lives, and yet nothing comes of it. Ultimately their reasoning turns into a play on words and terms; and as a word can be made to mean anything, they have a chance of easy escape from being caught by the person against whom they argue. It is just like wrestling. Or just as in a court of law, two barristers take up their points as truth, even though they may know for a fact that they are not true. They just fight with their reason and logic.

After intuition comes inspiration.

First of all, the rule that is necessary is that when you see that your impressions are right and your doubts cannot break them, and you have been right in ten impressions, and only wrong in one,—then you know that the wr ng one was not the impression you thought it was. When th t impression has evolved, then you are able to know things intuitively. The difference between imagination and intuition is sometimes puzzling to define. Both come in the same way. When a given imagination began to construct itself, we cannot say. The imagination came suddenly. But so also does intuition. That is why it is difficult to discriminate between them.

The truth is that if *imagination is with light*, then it is certainly intuition. Every imagination is intuition until it has been corrupted by reason. When the intuition is corrupted by reason it becomes imagination. But every imagination and every thought with the light of intelligence open is always an intuition, and therefore to an illuminated person any thought and every imagination is intuition. To him there is never a thought or imagination which is not an intuition. It always touches him.

But it is difficult to keep it from being corrupted by reason because as soon as it is produced we doubt whether it is right or not right. We doubt it until we have killed all the truth of our intuition. Our doubts are the enemies of our intuition always, and

therefore practice is required in every day life to keep intuition from being corrupted and finally destroyed by our doubts. We ought to bui d a fence round intuitions as if they were delicate little plants, and protect them from being destroyed by reason and doubts. By doing so, in time we grow to be sure of our intuitions, and then we never fail to get things right; and when the intuitions become right, dreams become right. We see what is really going to happen in every thought which comes to us, the truth of life. Then our life becomes a miracle. There is no need to look for wonders in the world. Our own has become full of wonders. To the illuminated one, every night's dream becomes a book that tells the past, the present, and future, both of himself and of all those whom he cares for or wishes to know about.

The next step consists in inspiration. Inspiration is not only a single thought coming, a single idea, but a flow of ideas. You may write them in poetry, in music, in philosophy, in speech, in writing, in thinking. The inspirations come as many ideas. It is a developed intuition. The expression of intuition is according to the particular ability. If a person speaks a beautiful language, he can express his ideas in that language. All prophets and messengers have received the message, but they have uttered it in different languages. Why should they receive it in different languages? Surely it is one idea, one knowledge,—from heaven, and it is expressed according to the language customary with the recipient, seeing that he has no other to express it in!

The angels are not as great as man because though they are gifted with the higher knowledge, are in the higher spheres, they have no power of expression. Man gets his knowledge from the higher source, but expresses it by the means provided by the lower spheres.

The Quran says (Chap. II): God said to the angels

"I am going to create man, who will be the chief of creation." They answer "Are we not a satisfactory army of servants who are always busy in Thy praise and admire Thy beauty and glorify Thy Name? Why intendest Thou to create one who will do evil therein, and shed blood" (as he does). The answer was "Are you capable of appreciating all that I have made? can you tell me what are the names of these things that I have made?" God asks man, man tells Him all the names of things, the things that are sweet, nectar, the names of all manner of things; he knows and enjoys all these things in nature. Therefore God says "We have created him that he may be the chief of all creation, and enjoy all that we have created." Therefore those who think that the heavenly knowledge is sufficient are mystical, but the joy of the heavenly knowledge and the full understanding of it comes from being able to express it in this world's medium of expression. Therefore man can have knowledge from within and from the external world—both. When the two are together, there is a perfect expression.

The last and most delicate degree of intuition is Revelation.

This comes to prophets and perfected beings. This is a full light thrown upon the human personality; full light from within. To his eyes, ears, sense of taste or touch—all things disclose their secret. Those who have received this knowledge partly, by receiving it have come to understand the properties of this plant or that, that this bitter medicine is good for this purpose, this sweet one for that, this drug or that vegetable; the knowledge of the property of the names and forms of the world are understood to the extent that revelation has helped them. When they look into the mind, they know all about the mind. When they give time to know about the earth, that they have come to know. Whatever it be that they try to know, that they obtain; that is

revelation. Those who look in the higher spheres are prophets, those who look on the earth are scientists, musicians, soldiers, etc. It is from the direction in which he has studied that he receives the revelation. In the higher spheres all things become clear to those who direct their attention to the higher spheres.

Man even sees his future in the teacup, with limited light; similarly he sees it in cards, in the crystal, in the coals in the fire, in smoke. All these things have the future written in them; it is the same light that is upon them, and begins to reveal itself in them. It is not only the writing, but all things in nature which begin to reveal the secrets of nature to him!

Sa'di says: "when the eyes open and begin to see with the divine light and divine sight, even the leaves of the tree become as the pages of a Bible to him."

Faith.

WHEN the question of "Faith" comes before the orthodox, they always think that it is their religion which is spoken of. To have faith in the religion, in the priests or clergy, in a certain dogma or ceremony or principle, or in a certain form of teaching—this is what is usually understood by the word "Faith." On the other hand, whose who are intellectual and look at life from a different point of view say that 'faith is blind,' 'why should we believe blindly?'

To a mystic, faith is the only power that works through the whole creation. He does not mean by faith a belief in a certain religion or dogma or ceremony or book or teacher. He means 'trust,' 'a trust' even in the absence of reason.

Many people possess this quality naturally, while others do not seem to possess it. We may think that this person has brought faith with him, and another not, because he has or has not that quality. But when we study life minutely we find that there is no soul which does not possess faith. How true it is when the prophet says "every soul when born is a faithful follower (lit. Moslem, which means 'faithful'), it is afterwards that he turns when he turns to the contrary." This really means that every soul is born on earth with a simple faith, and it is afterwards that it doubts. If it were not so we would never have been able to learn the language we speak. Was it not learned by faith, from infancy? When the mother says 'this is a "tree," ' the child says "tree"; when she says 'this is "water," ' the child calls it "water." And there are many things which the parents speak of apart from ordinary language and

the child believes them as they want him to believe. Whether the name given to the things be right or wrong, the child takes them as his guardians wish him to take them because that is his natural tendency.

In the beginning every soul is faithful. Then how is it that man loses this quality which nature has given? He loses it by the knowledge of names and forms. As he grows he covers his faith with the knowledge of names and forms, calling that 'learning.' At every step in his progress towards knowledge, he compares things, and considers some things poorer than others, saying of one thing 'this is true,' of another 'this is false'; 'this is what I can believe and rely upon,' and 'this is what I cannot believe and rely upon.' The one thing he calls true, the other false. But in reality neither is true nor false. It is only at the beginning of knowledge that man passes through this condition. Later, when a person has raised himself above the ordinary knowledge, he arrives at a stage when he is able to say "all that I have called true is not true, and all that I have called false is not false." He finds that whatever difference there is, it is a difference of comparison. This point of view is difficult and vague and everybody does not perceive it.

The course of human life involves so many disappointments, so many failures, so many heartaches, that no-one can avoid doubting. There is a peasant saying "He who once has burned his tongue with hot milk tries to cool butter-milk by blowing it." When a person has been deceived by one, he distrusts ten people; when he has found one person unreliable he may perhaps consider a hundred others are also unreliable. After failing in one thing he suspects he will fail in a thousand things. So many things take away that natural and powerful quality which was at first present—that faith which is the secret of the whole creation, the secret of all success that can ever be attained in life. This faith is broken by

life's discouraging experiences. When confidence in others is lost, then confidence in self is lost also, and the more it is lost, the more failures one meets. A doubting person considers himself to be wise and one of simple faith to be a fool. Whoever he sees, he suspects. Whatever he hears he questions whether it be right or wrong. He will doubt even his friend in business, waiting for the time to come when he can trust him. But that time never comes! His very doubts create doubts in the mind of the suspected person, and often the doubts come true as the effect of the doubter's thought, or at least it creates an illusion which for the moment shows the picture of his doubts.

How nicely the play of Othello demonstrates this. The more he doubted Desdemona, the more proofs for his doubt life created. His doubt was fed more and more by the illusive proofs until in the end he could not possibly believe the least thing contrary to his doubts. So it is with our own lives. We doubt; and that very doubt, that which we fear happens because it is created by us in the other person's heart. Whether the actions we see support our doubt or only seem to support it, yet our suspicion creates the desire in the doubted person.

We can experience the same thing with dogs. If we have the least fear of a dog, barking or biting, he will bark and come up to us to bite us. If there is no fear in us, the dog will not come towards us. The fear which makes us suspect that the dog will bite is enough to give the dog the desire to bite, because we are looking for it to do so.

If we could only develop the quality which is called 'faith,' about which so much is said in the Scriptures, in the Bible, in the Quran, we should find what power it would carry. It is the secret of all success.

We are here to fufil the purpose of our life. What is that purpose? Our desire, our inclination which is constantly at work in our mind,—that is the purpose

of our life. If we are unable to fulfil that inclination we go from this world without accomplishing our purpose. As Omar Khayam says 'Heaven is the vision of fulfilled desire;' 'Hell is the shadow of a soul on fire.' If the desires are not fulfilled, the soul is naturally on fire. But there is no reason why the desire should not be fulfilled, the very existence of a desire promises its fulfilment. In the heart of man is the desire of God. The Koran says "without the will of God, not even a single atom can move." This shows that every wave of thought and feeling, every motion and action is from God. Every thought that comes to our mind is God's thought, even if it appears to be a thought of every day life in the world.

Once man realises that every activity and impulse that comes into his mind is really from God, from that time he feels that it must be fulfilled. If it be not fulfilled, it is man's limitation that has become the cause of its hindrance. He has allowed his weakness to hinder its accomplishment. It is man's lack of faith that generally meets with failures. In faith is the secret of fulfilment or non-fulfilment of every thought. There is no doubt about the fulfilment of a desire if man's faith works with it. But when one's own reason and doubt come and destroy the hope, one generally meets with failure.

What an important part faith plays in life! Can there be anything equal to it? In the Arabic language it is called Iman. The whole religion is Faith, however much people have called the separate religions faiths. Faith itself is a religion.

Now the question arises, is one to believe and trust anyone blindly? Would not that be a blind faith? Would it not be covering the reason, the power of discrimination between right and wrong, between possible and impossible? Suppose a person says you are going to be a king, and you believe it, this would be a blind faith since there is no possibility of its being realised; still more impossible would it be to believe

if he said "You are a king;" when you see no sign of Kingship in your life, but the contrary.

The answer to this question is that the first lesson to be learnt is to have faith in oneself. How many among us there are who have no faith in themselves. It is this very lack that makes them have no faith in others. Once a person has faith in himself, he can have faith in others also. For instance, if I esteem a person to be good and spiritual, what matters it if the whole world should not think the same? But if a person says, 'I do not know, perhaps the other person thinks right, and I do not,' then that person has no faith. He does not know what faith is! He may have faith in a person and yet as the days go on, the time comes when he will lose it. A person who disbelieves in himself cannot believe in anybody else, and is really an unbeliever. Faith must begin within. Belief in oneself should be so strong that even if a thousand people say 'No,' he will say 'Yes.' To look to others for every opinion, not trusting oneself to say whether it is day or night, is to end, not only in distrusting others, but in developing into a kind of insanity.

Sometimes a person will say 'I had great faith once, but in the course of my life I have met with people one can never trust. They deceived me, and since then I have lost faith in everybody.' That person is much to be pitied. He has lost so much more than anybody else. The good quality which was in him has been killed by bad experience. How important it is that the heart of the faithful should be kept unbroken.

In India there is a custom of making birds fight for amusement. It is called 'buttase.' Two birds are brought together on a table, whilst all stand around to see the fun. As soon as the birds see one another they attack one another. The owner of each bird thinks "My bird will win, the prize will be mine." But as soon as it appears as if one bird will be beaten its owner takes it away, saying to the other, "you have

won, we will not continue the fight.'' This is because he wants to save his bird from being disappointed. The bird would be without faith.

Those who have no faith in themselves, those whose faith is broken are like the bird who is allowed to be beaten. However strong he may become, there will always remain the impression on his mind of having been beaten, and he cannot stand.

It is like this with the elephant, giant animal as he us. Once he is beaten, all his strength and power goes. For years together he will not forget it. With all that power which is within him, he will never attack another elephant. The faith that really gave him his power has all gone.

In the Hindustani language there is a saying ''failure and victory are each in the mind.'' If there is failure, it is in the mind. If there is victory, it is also in the mind. As long as the mind has not failed, a seeming failure may be a victory. But if the mind has failed, a seeming victory becomes a failure. That great power which the mind has is nothing but the power of Faith. People who have done great works have not done them in accordance with the number of things with which they were provided at first. For instances occur in which people began life without a penny, and yet have closed their lives possessors of millions. They have had no help to encourage then in life, or to raise them in life. They have raised their position themselves.

So we see that reason has no part in Faith. People may be called fanatics because they work only by faith, thinking that faith only enables us to imagine things. But there are numberless people who are thinking and reasoning all their lives, asking themselves 'shall I do this? how can I do that? how can I overcome those obstacles?'; all the time they are thinking of the hindrances, waiting for suitable environments to come, and they never come. The whole life may be spent in the pursuit of something reason forbids them from attaining.

It is quite otherwise with faith. When there is faith there is no thought about whether there are any means for accomplishing the desire that has come to the person's mind, or whether there are no means. This does not matter when faith is there, and cared for and used to defend the thought, to rain upon the thought and make the plant grow and bear fruit, so that some day one sees one's thought fulfilled.

Ask those people who have had wonderful lives in the world. See what they have to say about it. What does Christ say? What does Mahomet say?

Christ says to Peter, when he walks on the water, "O, little-of-faith, why didst thou doubt?" (Mt. 14, 31) "if thou hadst faith, thou couldest have conquered the waters."

In the different wars that the prophet of Arabia had to face throughout his life, what do we find? From the beginning to the end there were wars. He was born an orphan, for his father was not living at the time of his birth and his mother died in giving him birth. There were no means, either of money, or of power; and when the message was given, then the whole community rose against him. Even his relatives were against him. What stayed by him? It was his faith. His call to his people was to have 'faith.'

It once happened that when the army of the prophet's enemies had success, one among them by chance caught the prophet alone. He was sitting on his chest and wanted to kill him. But before doing so, he said, "Good prophet, all your life you have taught the name of God. Now tell me where your God is. Where has he gone?" And the prophet cried "Oh, that Name of God who is named night and day," and as soon as that name came to his mind, the strength of the whole world came into the prophet. With one bound he brought this man down, took his sword in his hand, saying "Who will save you now, since you are again in my hands," And he said "Oh, Mahomet." And

Mahomet said, "Oh, man of little faith, till now you have not learned the lesson. Now you have seen that my faith in Him saved me. He has just saved me. If you take the name He will save you too. Ask him."

The strength of that faith and the hope it imparts, the power it gives, the might that faith can give—is there anything like it?

One person may doubt, and doubt, and doubt. Things will come and perhaps things will not come. Another person will trust, and he will be watching, and his trust will become bigger with every experience.

There is a story of a Sufi who was travelling with a caravan through Arabia. Amongst the travellers were some with provisions for their expenses. They came to a place where it was said "This is a place where robbers are likely. Everybody must take care of his own purse. As many caravans have been robbed about here, we should be prepared." This young Sufi had some money also, but he thought to himself, "I have no place to keep my money. I will find some man with whom I can leave it. To whom can I give it for safety?" He was wondering if there could be any village or habitation, but could only find a tent some distance away from where the caravan had come to a halt. So he went and found a man sitting smoking his pipe in the tent. He went up to him and said, "I do not know you sir, but I have heard there are robbers here and that many caravans have been robbed, and I am a poor man. I thought I must save my money, if I could only see someone to whom I could trust it; having found this tent, I feel I should entrust it to you." He left the purse and returned to the caravan. When he arrived he found that the caravan had been robbed, and all had lost their money. He was very glad he had escaped. They were all moaning and lamenting about their losses. He thought that he at any rate was safe. Then they described the robbers, saying how many of them had come. "So many" were there.

Then he returned to the tent to fetch his money again. He found the same man smoking there, but he was surrounded by many men, for he proved to be the chief of the robbers. The others were all sitting there, fighting and disputing what share each should take, and the chief was helping them to divide their spoil.

So the young man was afraid to go nearer, and at the same time could not help thinking how foolish he was not to have kept it, for while he was bringing it the robbers had come and so he would have escaped anyway. They lost everything but he himself had fooled himself. While he was thinking this, and was about to turn away, the chief called out for him to be fetched. He approached the chief trembling because he believed that now even his life was in danger. The chief said "Why did you come here, why are you trying to go away again?" The young man asked "Are you not the head of the robbers—then why should I not wish to go; what use can it be to come?" The chief answered, "Man, I received your money to keep; I did not rob you of it. You trusted me. The money is therefore your trust. Even if I am a robber, I am not dishonest. I gain through robbery, not by breaking trust. You trusted me with your money, and your money is safe. Here it is for you to take back again." So the young man was delighted, reflecting what a good thing trust is, inasmuch as one may have faith even in a robber, for he had proved himself trustworthy.

We can see this in our every-day life. A servant, a helper, an assistant, a co-worker, a partner can be made either trustful or distrustful, trustworthy or unworthy of trust—this we do ourselves by our own faith. How true it is that when faith is beginning to fail, when doubts begin to come, the loss of faith goes on until a person begins to doubt his nearest and dearest friends. Husband can doubt wife, wife can doubt husband, brother can doubt sister, parents can doubt children. One can doubt one's nearest friend, and in the end one doubts oneself. There is the last limit. From then life can be nothing less than a torture.

The question arises, Is it right to cover our reason, and act according to our faith? The answer is, "No, it is not right." Reason is the mistress of faith, and faith is the king of reason. But failure comes when reason becomes the king, and faith the mistress. Success comes when faith is king and reason is the mistress. Reason helps faith. Reason is the servant of faith. If faith says "I wish to open a factory," reason replies "Yes, you can proceed with your factory in this way. There is your success." The reason is servant. The faith is the first thing. Faith says, "I will succeed." Reason says "These are the different paths you will have to take." This is how faith is helped by reason.

It is very different when reason is king. When reason is king, it says "Open a factory? why, just look at yourself, without a single penny in your pocket." Faith says, "Yes you are right." Reason says, "You don't know anything about a factory, how can you pretend to carry on such work?" And Faith answers, "Yes, I will not think about it any more." When Reason is the leader of Faith, the result is failure. It is when faith is the leader of reason that there is success.

In regard to the matter of trusting people, a person thinks "Is it right to believe in anything a person says? is it right to trust everybody? There are many people who are not worth trusting, shall we then trust everybody in order to develop our trust?" The answer is, "Yes." Perhaps you will have failures but you will only trust another person when you trust yourself, when you have faith yourself then you will have faith in another. Without faith in yourself you can never have faith in another. To have faith in another is to have faith in yourself. It does not matter if once or twice you are disappointed, but if you are afraid of being disappointed even once in your life, perhaps all your life you will doubt, and therefore there will never come a time when you will be able to

trust anybody, even yourself. There are many things that can develop your trust. Sometimes an unworthy person can become worthy of trust.

The Hindoos say that if you have faith in an idol-god that god will listen and grant your desires, and if you have not faith in the God of heaven even He is helpless to do anything for you. The Bible says "a mustard-seed-worth-of faith can remove mountains."

There is a story that once a preacher was speaking in a little village in India. The peasants he was speaking to could not understand philosophy or mysticism or about the great problems of life. What they preach is "Have faith in God," "faith is such a great virtue." When speaking about faith he said that if a person repeated the sacred word he would be able to walk on water. Everyone was delighted to hear this, saying "What a great thing—he is continually talking about this same thing," Next day an old man came and said "Sir, I cannot understand the deep problems of life, but I was very delighted with your ideas last evening." The preacher answered "What was that?" He said, "I was very much surprised,—very much surprised. Will you come and dine at my place. It will be such an honour." The preacher said, "Yes, with great pleasure."

A day was appointed. When the day came, this man arrived to fetch the preacher, and they set off together. On their way there was a little river which had to be crossed. When they reached the bank, the preacher said "Where is the boat?" "Why do you ask for a boat?" the peasant replied. The other day you said that when you use that sacred word you can walk on the water. "And I was very much astonished to find that it is so. Why take a boat when it is only necessary to say that word?" But the preacher could not do it. He was not a true teacher. So he said to the old man "You are my teacher. I have spoken, but you have acted, and if I had had your faith I would also have been able to cross."

That shows to us that things sometimes seem obscured, as if in a mist, as through a glass darkly. We fear beforehand that a thing will never come, that there will always be disappointment, failure, sorrow. Depression comes on. We begin to think the times will never alter, and the conditions continue. The only remedy to clear these clouds away is to look for a better time, to hope for something better in life, to feel that every thought, desire, and impulse that comes to our heart is from Him, and that it is to be accomplished with all power for some purpose. Not even circumstances in life, not even friends and advisors in life, not our reason or our doubt should be allowed to break the fulfilment of our thoughts. It is through that one thing Faith that our thoughts are kept powerful and full of strength, it is by nothing but that one thing—Faith.

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The word faith is really expressive of a *power* operating through all lives, and imparted to each person from the time of birth. The Power is obscured as soon as the Reason is developed, as occurs during the process of acquiring the knowledge which is used for maintaining mere life. As the Power becomes obscured, the person loses his confidence, and his confidence in others. This is Doubt, which is the greatest enemy to the progress of the soul towards self-realisation. It is removed as soon as it is perceived that Faith is really a Power from God, whereby He Himself is seeking to express Himself through the individual.

Confidence is assured not by a blind 'belief,' but by a careful insight into the life which is around us. The higher self is then able to be like the rider on a horse and direct all the affairs and actions which the lower self is doing. Faith defends the innate desire of the higher self, rains upon it and makes it grow into a perfect fruit. The more faith develops, the greater is its influence (through us) upon all around. Faith breeds faith. Faith must dominate the Reason, and direct the reason. Faith will the more surely do this once we realise that every thought, desire, and impulse that comes to our heart is from Him, to be accomplished for some great purpose of His own.

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Turning from this interpretation of Faith to the scriptures familiar to us we cannot but be struck with the insistence of the

same truth throughout the New Testament. 'Be not faithless but believing;' 'According to your faith be it unto you;' 'Your faith should not stand in the wisdom-of-men, but in the power of God' (''wisdom-of-men''=Reason; ''Power-of-God''=Faith); 'By faith ye stand'; 'Receive the end (goal, culmination) of your faith, namely salvation.' 'Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' There is no greater lesson than this; it is at the forefront of the Apostolic teaching. Those who experience the reality can speak for the genuineness of a teacher by the degree of his insistence on the root foundation of faith. Faith is fed by hope,—the hope of achievement of Fusion with the Beloved; and the last stage of Faith is when we pass from the threshold into the actual city of Love. 'And now abideth faith, hope and love; these three. But the greatest of these is the Divine Love' where lover, Beloved, and Love are all One.

The Effect of Prayer.

KEEN study of life enables us to perceive that every individual is dependent upon every other. This is true for all aspects of life. The rich is dependent upon the poor, the strong upon the weak, the wise upon the foolish. When we see how limited man is even at the best, we see that it cannot be otherwise than that one must depend upon another in order to obtain the needs of life.

It is evident that the servant is dependent upon the wages that are paid him, that the worker is dependent on the money he receives. But there are needs which money cannot buy, and then he who receives repays by love or kindness or care. The time has come when money is too poor, when influence is powerless to buy or take. When this is so, the natural thing is to pay respect and adoration to the someone in life to whom money and influence cannot be given. It does not matter whether the respect and adoration is given with a selfish or an unselfish motive; in either case there is the same dependence. One is dependent upon one's beloved, or upon one's wife, or upon one's neighbour; yes, even upon one's servant. How troubles and difficulties begin if that servant happens not to be at home!

Whether one pays money or whether one can only show love and adoration, one is dependent just the same! From the time when one opens one's eyes as an infant one's life is nothing but dependence all through.

Those who watch keenly will see what is real dependence and how far-reaching that dependence is in our life. Those who need money, are they not dependent on persons who have money? Those who desire position, are they not dependent upon someone who

has position, such as the Secretary of State, a lord, a duke, a high official? The more he reflects, the vaster does he see this web of dependence to be. More and more clear does it become that all the sources upon which people draw their dependence exist for the use of the different individuals. One individual desires or needs wealth; and therefore there are people who have it and he can be dependent upon them. Another may desire or need a rise of position; therefore there is someone who is in a high position who can knight him or place him in a higher position. He will bow to this one, he will respect him, he will do anything to gain his favour and kindness.

When we discern that every individual has some different source of power before whom he bows, to whom he turns, on whom he is dependent, the question comes, "Is there any *one* Source which is supreme above all these other sources of power?" These various sources depend on one another. Is there one which reigns over all? The answer is, "Yes, there is One. There is a Source which reigns over all other sources of power." This One Source is that which we idealise and name 'God.'

Those who idealise this source call upon Him, pay all their respect to Him, turn to Him in every difficulty, in every trouble, in every want. There is no one who will suffice to console them, there is no means of assistance, no help to be obtained, but this one Ideal on which they fix their eyes, this Ideal which is not known nor seen, yet idealised in the mind. How poor all other sources are compared with that One Source! Whereas all the various sources to which men bow, on which men depend are so uncertain, that to-day they are kind and to-morrow they are not, yet that One Source is all-sufficient, never changes, is Almighty. From that Source all things can be obtained! It is just as it says in the Bible, "If you ask your Father for bread He will not give you a stone." He never refuses. All other sources are only apparent powers,

for after all, even if they do succeed in giving anything, it is still really the one Source that has given them the power to provide our need.

The Nizam of Hyderabad, the last king of the Deccan, was a great mystic and a very good man. He used to say to those who had obtained access to him and made a complaint of not having yet received help, "Have you got an order from There? If you have got one from There I will give you help, but if you have not got it from There, I will not give it to you."

In the Koran there is a surra which says: "God alone is rich, and all are poor" (Cf. Ps. 50: 10).

The more we study life the more we see the truth of this surra. People may live in palaces endowed with all manner of wealth and comfort, and yet they can still reflect: "if I had that, I would never be unhappy again." People may have their motor-cars, their furs, their wealth of millions, and yet cannot truthfully say "I am perfectly happy." Can they say "I have all that I need in life?" Is there anyone who can say this? You are more likely to find such a one among those who are poor than among those who are wealthy.

This shows that God alone is rich. Whoever has need is poor. Poverty means 'need.' As long as there is need there is poverty. Since man's life is full of needs he must be in poverty. He is still in darkness if he does not realise that there is only One who is rich.

Undoubtedly we all of us have our needs through life. How many times do we experience disappointment regarding them! How many are disappointed in love, in money, in help, in service! How apt the heart is to be discouraged, disappointed, broken. "Oh, this is my brother, my only brother, and yet he has not helped me at this hour of need". . . "I looked on her as my sister, and yet she has failed me at this crucial time." So many disappointments do people meet in life! One depends, depends, depends, on limited sources, never reflecting that these sources can only sometimes be helpful, that may times they

are quite unable to help, however much they might desire to do so.

There remains the One Source which is always helpful and always can help. It is only because man does not see Him, does not realise Him, that he doubts whether there is such a Being as God or not. However religious or pious he is, he always looks to a material agent for help! However religious or pious, he cannot explain God. Not even a mystic or philosopher can explain him. The ideal of God is the first lesson that must be learnt, and it cannot be learnt by analysis. Therefore the intellectual mind which seeks for an analysis of God is always sure to be disappointed. The philosopher said truly when he said "To analyse God is to dethrone God." Analysis can never pourtray even the ideal of God. That is how it is that every messenger—Mahomet, Christ, Moses, Abraham,—emphasised the one word "Faith."

But it is not to be thought that these seers and holy ones and teachers, who had such power and realisation, could have wanted the world to imagine that this faith should be blind. They themselves learned the first lesson that it is no use beginning with the idea that "If I analyse God I shall believe Him." Such an one will never believe. The first step is faith, and not reasoning or intellectual perception. Can you explain to anyone why it is that a diamond is worth £20,000? "Is their any *reason* for this?" "Yes," you say, "it is because it is sold in the market for that price." There is no other explanation! You may answer "It is a stone." And I may say "Yes, it is a bright stone, no doubt it is better than glass, It is certainly brighter than a crystal. But why £20,000?' The answer is just this, "It is £20,000 because your ideal has made it so." The ideal is only another way of saying "There is no explanation." You have to take it that it *is* £20,000 in value. It is the same with every ideal, even with the ideal of God. An ideal is beyond explanation.

We rise by treading the path of faith. Some day we will realise what God is, but that only comes after the first lesson has been learned. Faith is the A, B,C of the revelation of God. This faith is begun by prayer.

There are three different kinds of prayer.

I. One prayer is thanksgiving to God for His great goodness, for all that we receive in our life; asking God for His mercy and favour and forgiveness; asking God to grant the desires and wishes that we have. That is the first prayer. This is the first lesson that man has to learn. The other kinds of prayer can only be used as man develops.

In thanking God for all that He has given us, we develop that very thankfulness which man so usually forgets. If we could only reflect upon how many things there are in our life for which we should be thankful and appreciative! But we scarcely ever think about it. We so often think about what we have *not* got, and therefore keep ourselves always unhappy, when we might be thankful to have a few pennies in our purse. Instead of that we think we should have a few shillings instead! The consequence is that man forgets to develop the thankful nature, he is unthankful to everyone, and therefore whatever is done for him he is still unthankful.

It is the same with all the trouble and struggle that there is in the world. It is his neglect of all that is done for him, his neglect of acknowledging his appreciation of all that is done for him that causes the spread of unthankfulness. Having forgotten the prayer of thanking God, how can he thank man?

How that beautiful custom is disappearing, of saying 'grace' before partaking of the meal! This custom is no longer to be found at fashionable tables; only at houses where there is no fashion, for when Fashion comes, the things that are helpful, moral and spiritual are forgotten. But what a beautiful thought it is to say grace even before a bread-and-butter tea, before a

humble dinner. When thanks have been given to God, however simple the dinner may be, it becomes delicious because of the feeling of thankfulness, the feeling that this is a gift that has been bestowed upon us.

Think too of when Sa'di was travelling to Persia, sorely stricken because he had to walk with bare feet in the hot sun. It was so painful to walk that he was thinking "There can be no one in the world who is so wretched and miserable as I." But two minutes did not pass before he came across a person whose feet were both useless, so that he was crawling along the ground and only progressing with great difficulty. This caused a prayer to rise in Sa'dis's heart, and he became thankful he was not afflicted like that. "If I have no shoes, at least my feet are healthy and sound."

It is when we engage our whole attention in observing the misery and difficulties that are around us that we become discontented. It is when we are blind to the goodness and kindness and sympathy and service and help which our fellow men give to us that we become discontented. There is so much to look at in our lives to excite the feeling of thankfulness in us.

Then there is the mystical meaning of thankfulness. That person who is always grudging is so much the more in need of prayer. If he prays he will prepare influences which will remove the miseries and wretchedness in his mind, for all this misery is created by his mind during the act of grumbling and having a grudge. The person who is thankful and contented and appreciative with all that befalls him in life develops the sense of goodness in his life. The more appreciative he is the more thankful he becomes and the more does he receive. Thankfulness and appreciation inevitably attract more of their like to themselves. All that we give is also given to us. But grumbling and grudging also attract their like to ourselves. If the person to whom we give a reward or gift receives it grudgingly and grumblingly, shall we give him more? Indeed,

the fact that we do not give him more gives him still more to grumble about! But the person who is glad and thankful and appreciative of what is done for him, you think he is so good. It gives you such a feeling and such happiness to see him happy and appreciative and contented, that he encourages you to do more, and it encourages others to do good also.

Besides thankfulness there is the request for forgiveness and mercy. The effects of this are also to be seen in our daily life. A servant or child or young man who is abrupt will push against you and never say "I am sorry." But another person says "I am sorry" and at once you have forgotten the harm that he has inadvertently done to you. That is the effect which his request for forgiveness has produced!

In some countries and among some people (as for instance in France) there is a custom that when a person meets you at the door or on the stairs he shall take off his hat and say 'pardon.' There is no reason why he should do so except that he chanced to meet you, and he thinks that perhaps he should be forgiven. We find that the sensitiveness of man's heart is so delicate that even the presence of a stranger causes a jar. But by saying 'pardon' that uncomfortable feeling is at once removed, and in the place of that the good feeling of friendship is introduced. However great a fault may be, if this person only comes and says "I am very sorry, I will never do it again, pray forgive," the friendship at once comes back. On the other hand, however trivial and slight the fault may have been, if pride prevents the man from asking forgiveness and pardon, perhaps he will lose that friendship for the rest of his life. His pride prevents him from asking pardon. The fault may have been very small, and he may say 'I do not care about it,' and yet the friendship is broken. How many there are who would be ready to forgive if only the person came and said 'I am sorry.' But everybody will not do it; he will not admit he has been in fault.

To ask forgiveness of another produces a proper sense of justice in man's mind. He perceives the need for asking God to pardon his faults. When he asks for forgiveness that forgiveness develops in his nature too, and he becomes ready to forgive others. Christ says in His prayer "forgive us because we have forgiven others." The virtue, the secret is in that. By asking forgiveness of God you give up the desire to demand forgiveness from your fellowmen, and you desire to give forgiveness to him. We see this with the Arabs and Bedouins in Mecca and the deserts. They are so ready to fight one another and kill each other. They may be fighting and actually have their knives drawn to kill one another, and yet if a third person comes along and says "Forgive, for the sake of God and the prophet," do you know as soon as they hear these words they will both throw away their knives and shake hands! The hand-shake is the seal of friendship. Though the Bedouin has no education, yet he has such a devotion to God and His Prophet that no sooner does he hear these words than he at once offers his hand, and from that day there is no spite nor evil thought in his heart.

If we only had that! With all our education and learning, with all the claims of civilisation that we make, we are not as good as these. We retain the bitterness in our hearts. We never reflect what a poison it is. The very person who would shudder at the idea of having something in his body that is decayed and offensive, something that should not be there but should be taken off or cut out or removed,—will tolerate that poison of bitterness in his mind (the real and higher self); he will not take it out; he will foster it. Did he not lack the sense of forgiveness, did he not neglect to cultivate the habit of asking forgiveness, he would become ready to forgive and forget.

Have you ever experienced the joy when two friends who have quarrelled have mutually asked forgiveness of one another? It is as if there were no more possi-

bility of ill-feeling. It is the most delightful feeling. It feels as if the doors of heaven were open for both. When the bitterness has gone, it is as if a mountain had gone, and the heart were free again.

The third part of the first kind of prayer is our need. This is a delicate thing and yet it is a great virtue. What a beautiful nature it is that will refrain from asking relief from trouble, from difficulty and suffering except from the one Friend. They are too shy to ask anybody. They have that sense of honour which forbids them from intruding. This is a virtue and not pride. The door of faith is kept open for that Friend upon whom they can call and ask and obtain ease. "There is One to whom I can go in my trouble and distress and despair. You are the one, the only one. You are He before Whom nothing is hid. If I desire to unburden myself of this trouble, You, O Lord, are He to Whom I will go."

What a great thing this is! What a sense of honour it is that causes him to refrain from telling his suffering to anyone but God, believing that He will help more than any one can help. Perhaps another man could help but it will not bring the satisfaction that comes when it is God that has given the help. What a great pleasure, what a great honour God has done to give him help! That is what comes when the problem has been solved which comes into the life of every noble man, everyone with tender feelings, with inherited good and religious sentiments—solved by deciding that "there is no-one whom I will ask in my poverty and trouble and need but only God." These are three things that go to make up the first kind of prayer.

There is a story of the Amir of Cabul, He was once travelling in the jungle on a shooting excursion. It happened that his body-guards and people had remained behind, and he could not find them. Being hungry and thirsty, he thought he would go somewhere in the fields to see if there were not some house where he could obtain some food. At length he finds the

house of a peasant, and says "I am hungry; can you give me some food?" Of course they do not know it is the Emperor, and they are very glad to bring a bowl of buttermilk—the drink of the poor people there—and some bread, with a little pickle and some butter. The Amir was very glad of all these simple things; so hungry was he that he found the dish delicious, besides the goodness and the kindness with which they welcomed him satisfied him still more; how glad they were to serve him. All these things impressed his mind. He said "How do you get on?" They expressed their contentment in saying "Thanks to God we get on very well. Sometimes famines come, but we have had no difficulties. The last one was twelve years ago."

The Emperor replied, "Whenever you have difficulty" (giving them his seal) "bring this to the city, and show it to any of the authorities and I will try my best to help you."

They said, "Thank you, sir," and hesitated to accept the royal seal, since their hospitality and kindness was given without thought of reward, but only out of their desire to please, and out of love and goodness.

But a few years later a time of famine came round, and it was very severe. So hard was the famine that they had no animals left in their fields to work with, there was no food, and their children began to starve. They could not bear to see the starvation of their children. The wife said "Will you go to the city and take the seal and find the man who gave it to us. Perhaps he will be able to help us. The trouble is nothing to us, but our children are starving and it is great suffering for them." Saying "yes" he took the seal and duly reached Cabul.

Here he shows the seal to a policeman, and as soon as the latter sees it he says "It is the seal of the Amir" and therefore he takes him to the palace. The peasant had never seen a palace before, but he goes there and is told that the Emperor cannot be seen till he is at liberty. The peasant must wait in the hall.

So he sits in the hall, where the Amir is offering his prayers. The peasant stands and waits for the Amir, trembling at the prospect of seeing him, for he did not know before that it was the Amir himself who had been at his house. Then he begins to wonder what the Amir is doing there, bowing and kneeling and prostrating, and performing all the proper ceremonies of prayer.

After a time, the prayer is finished, and he calls the man saying "I am at liberty. For what reason do you come? How is your family?" He replies, "the famine is very bad, and that is what has made me come. But please tell me what is it you have been doing all this time." And the Emperor says "offering prayers to God." And he says "To whom? God? God? For what?" "It is to give me all that I seek, and to give my subjects all that they need. His support, His protection." So he says, "is there anyone who can give you and your subjects what they wish?" "Yes, it is God who can do that." So the peasant replies "If there is a person higher than you, why should not I also ask *Him* in my need?"

The king is moved to tears at the sight of the patience of this man, the spirit of this man, whose family was left starving; he is here before the Amir seeking for help, and yet as soon as he comes to know that there is a greater king, a King higher than all the kings of the world, he says "why should I not ask Him too!" The Amir was much moved. He sent all that was needed, with the word that the King of kings had sent it, not he.

What honour, what spirit it brings when man fixes his trust on Him who is called 'Almighty,' who *is* Almighty. Rumi says, "When the fire, air, earth and water all seem to us dead things, the elements, yet they are servants to God. They work for Him, and they *always* obey Him!" (Mesnavi). And he goes on to say in another part of his Mesnavi, "man, when he becomes intelligent, begins to see causes. But it is

the superman who sees the cause of causes, the source of causes.'' God is the cause of causes, the precedent cause. One who looks at the precedent cause sees the cause of all in time. A person may study causes all his life, and yet never come to understand the cause of causes. All causes, before that cause, become effects! That cause remains the Cause which is called ''the Word''; then it became Light. ''When the word was spoken,'' says Koran, ''all things came to existence.'' ''Without Him (the Word)'' says S. John, ''was not any thing made that was made'' (J. i, 3.),

What is this Cause? It is that inner divine impulse which has made itself active in every direction and has accomplished whatever it purposed. It is that which has accomplished all things. The one cause behind all things is the cause which we call the Power of God.

II. There are two more ways of Prayer.

When people have evolved, they begin to use a still higher prayer. That prayer is the Adoration of the Immanence of God in the sublimity of Nature. Read the lives of all the prophets and teachers from Krishna to Buddha, Moses to Mahomet, Abraham to Christ, and see how they dwelt in the jungles, and went into the forests, sat beneath trees, and there recognised the divine immanence in all around them. It is a prayer —not to a God in 'heaven'—but to a God living in heaven *and* on earth—both.

What praise of God, praise of His creation, praise of His nature will develop in man! It develops in him such an art that nothing can compare with, a sense of music with which no music can be compared. He begins to see how natures are attracted to one another, and how they harmonise; he sees how inharmonies are produced. The causes of all such things become clear to him once he begins to see into Nature, to admire the beauty of its construction, its life, its growth; as soon as he begins to study Nature and its causes.

Those who have praised Nature through their art appeal directly to man's heart. Those who praise

Nature in their music become artists in music and those who have expressed their praise in poetry and verses are seen to be great poets. All of them appeal to the heart of man because they have seen God. They have seen Him in Nature, and not alone in Nature but also on earth. They have turned earth into heaven. That is the next, the higher step.

Zoroaster has said "Look at the sun when you pray, at the moon when you pray, at the fire when you pray." People therefore call them sun-worshippers, fire-worshippers, when all the time this worship was merely a way of directing man's attention to all the witnesses of God which express His nature. The one who cannot see any traces of God anywhere can see Him by looking at all these beautiful things, and observing the harmonious working of all these things.

From beginning to end, the Koran points to nature, showing how by the sun that rises in the morning, and by the moon that comes in the evening, by the Nature that is over all—there is God! Why does the Koran always express it this way? If you wish to have some proof of God, look at nature and see how wisely it is made! or is it without wisdom? "Mankind, with your wisdom you become so proud that you think there is nothing else worthy. You know not that there is a Perfection of Wisdom before which man is not as a drop to the ocean." Man looks at the surface of the ocean. Yet he is so small that he cannot even be compared to one of its drops, limited as he is in intellect and in his knowledge. He seeks to find out the whole creation, whereas those who have just touched it have bowed to God, forgetting their limited self. After that, God remained, and spoke through them. Such are the only beings who have been able to give any truth to the world.

As Amir says, "He who has lost his limited self, he it is who has attained the High Presence." Do we not forget ourselves when we behold the Vision of Beauty? If we are blind to beauty of course we cannot see it

and then we cannot forget ourselves in the beauty and sublimity of vision.

When we perceive the beauty of Nature we bow our head in love and admiration. "I cannot study you for you are too great, you are too beautiful. The only thing left for me to do is to bow my head in prostration at your feet."

If we could only see this perfect beauty around us, if we only had our eyes opened to it, we should at once bow the head in all humility before ever deeming to make a study of it. No pride could find a place in our heart. Without any doubt we should bow our head before this beauty of wisdom of the Creator, the art of the Creator, and his skill in the flowers and plants, and leaves; in the construction of man, his birth and all other things in life.

It would suffice did we but once ask how all these things have come. But, as the poet says, "where there are no teeth, milk is given. When the teeth come, the food suitable for teeth comes also." The eyes are so delicate, and yet a delicate eyelid is formed for them to cover them and protect them! How all the organs of man's body are fitted and suited for the purpose for which they are made! And with all that there is also the beauty of the art with which the things are made. And the height of beauty is attained in the skill shown in the making of mankind.

Whoever has seen beauty has found that beauty cannot exist without wisdom. Wisdom is behind creation. The one life which has created the lakes and plants and birds and all things is both one life and one wisdom. The flower, the leaf and the fruit and branches all come from one root, even though they have different names. It is all one. It might be called He or She; yet it is both. When we see that Life with Wisdom is both He and She we see that Wisdom is behind all things that we see. And then we say that that which is behind all things is a person whom we call God.

III. The third way of prayer is still greater. It is the way followed by philosophers, and mystics. Advancement in this spiritual path is gradual. One cannot use this third way without first having used the other two kinds of Prayer.

The third kind of prayer is that of Invocation of the Nature of God, of the Truth of His being. These are symbolic names. In their meaning there is a subtlety. God's nature is explained in this form of prayer; He is analysed. The benefit of this prayer is perceived when one has arrived on this plane. And the benefit is that he has passed from being a human being—as in the first prayer, through being a holy being—as in the second prayer—to become a superman. Why? Because this third prayer is in order to bring man still closer to God. Not only does this prayer draw him closer to God, but it makes him forget his limited self until it is entirely forgotten in the end, leaving only the self of God,—the only ideal and aim of all teachers!

Man has not arrived at his ideal goal until he has used prayer to help him to this stage.

When we look at things from a mystical point of view, we shall find that there is one single straight line, which is called *Aim*. That line represent the line of the life of any being. The upper end is God, the lower end is man. The line is one. But though that line is one to the mystic, the philosopher, the truth of God, yet the line is unlimited at the upper end, limited at the other. One end is in immortality, the other in mortality.

The innermost yearning of life is to see the ends brought together. It is the third prayer that draws the end near to man near to the end which is God. When he invokes the names of God man forgets his limitations, and he impresses his soul with the thought of the Unlimited. This brings him to the ideal of unlimitedness.

That is the secret of life's attainment.

Man is the picture or reflection of his imagination. He is as large as he thinks himself, as great as he thinks himself, as small as he thinks himself. If he thinks he is incapable he remains incapable; if he thinks himself foolish he will be foolish and will remain foolish; if he thinks himself wise, he will be wise and become wiser every moment; if he thinks himself mighty he is mighty. Those who have proved themselves to be the greatest warriors, where did their might come from? It was from their thought, their feeling that "I am a mighty one." The idea of 'mighty one' was impressed on their soul, and the soul became might. The poet had poetry impressed on his soul, and so the soul became a poet. Whatever is impressed on man's soul, with that the soul becomes endowed, and that the soul will become. If the devil impresses himself on man's soul, he will become a devil; if God impresses Himself on man's soul, he will turn into God!

The Mystery of Breath

TO a Mystic, the subject of breath is the deepest of all the subjects with which mysticism or philosophy is coucerned, because Breath is the most important thing in life. The very life of man is breath. He lives in the presence of God, and in the absence of Breath man is called a 'corpse.' After death the organs of the body are just the same as before. The only thing that has become lacking is his breath.

Breath is that within ourselves which keeps all the parts of the body in connection with one another, working together, depending upon one another; it is that which enables man to move, to put his muscles into action, to keep the whole mechanism of the body always at work. There is no other force or power concerned in all this than this power of breath.

Mystics know that it is regularity of breath that brings good health; that irregularity of breath is the cause of all illness. Many teachers and students of physical culture know that it is not the exercises and practices of this culture that cause the muscles to develop, that impart strength and vigour to the body; they know, as did the ancient mystics in India, that it is a matter of the breath. To practice for one moment with the help of the breath will do more than a whole day's exercises carried on without considering the help of the breath. In the last case, the muscles cannot be developed, whereas in the first case the physical body is easily developed with very little physical practice. That this is true is easily shown by looking at the porters on the railway-stations. If the physical labour were the only thing needed to develop muscles, would they not all be veritable Sandows?

It is especially in India that we can study how men work with heavy things. Sometimes a man will carry on his shoulder a burden that it would ordinarily be impossible for a man of his physique to carry. Yet such a man can not only lift it, but he will walk with it. And when you watch you will find that the secret lies just in the way of breathing. If he did not breathe correctly he could not possibly carry the weight the least distance. There is in India a man called Rama Muti. He can lift elephants, and stop motor-cars running in full force. When he was asked "whence did you get this gigantic strength? you look like an ordinary human being, not like a monster" (he was not extraordinary in size), he said "You know and yet you do not know. The secret lies in the breath which is all power. As man cannot see it he does not believe the possibility of breath giving power. He attaches all importance to the things he can see and wear and touch. He is so material. He cannot see anything beyond the matter which his physical eyes are able to see. He is as a blind person who can only feel and not see. He cannot see that strength is something greater than a rock."

How difficult it is for man to perceive the truth of which the Bible speaks: "Your faith will remove mountains." He thinks mountains are stronger than faith. How can faith be stronger than the rocks and the mountains? Man cannot lift the mass of a mountain. Surely the mountain is stronger than faith! The idea is too subtle, too fine.

And it is the same with all other fine and subtle things. Even in our own life so much more importance is given to the study of the material sciences, while the spiritual, the higher knowledge is neglected. More importance is always given to the development of bodily strength. Therefore, when man goes to the sea-side, often the first thing he does is to weigh himself so that he can find out how many pounds he has gained during his holiday. He never thinks how little

time it will take for all those pounds to go away again! The weight he has gained at the sea-side he will lose again. He does not understand that it is energy that makes a person move and feel active and in good health, not the bodily weight. Is it not true that the addition of weight to the body makes him lazy and comfort-seeking and often results in illness? And yet how pleased many people are when they have gained in weight.

Then when we consider about mind, we find that Breath has to do with mind also. The mystic knows that the breath which we perceive by exhaling and inhaling through the nostrils is not the essential breath, but only the result of a current which runs not only through the body but also through *all* the planes of man's existence. That which the nostrils feel is the result of the activity of breath. Were it not so we could not explain how mind, which is so much vaster, and finer than the body, and is a separate element, can possibly exert an effect on the body and the body on the mind.

Every passion, every emotion has its effect upon the mind, and every change of mind, however slight, has its effect upon man's body. Physicians in all ages have realised that consumption is generally an outcome of constant worry.

What keeps mind and body connected? What keeps mind always active? What gives mind its vigour to create imaginations, to create thoughts, and not only to create them but to retain them by the faculty we call memory; to keep the knowledge by the faculty we call reason; to possess emotions which can be sometimes felt and sometimes not felt? Where does mind keep all these things? What force can it be that is behind them all? Is it not the Breath? That is why the mystic studies and realises and masters the Breath, in order to master not only the physical body but also the mind.

From the mystic point of view, it is evident that

there is some strength, some current, some affinity which runs through and binds together all the trees and plants in a forest, and causes the desert to be without them; which causes the coal-mine to have coal all round it, the gold-mine to have gold all round it, the sulphur-mine to have sulphur all round it. This strength or force draws all these elements together.

So it is also with the tides of the sea, that accounts for the waters running in the same direction, whether at first they lie to south, and east, and west, and north; that accounts for the surface of the waves keeping the rhythm. Wherever we look, be it the changes of the seasons, the changes of the weather, and even the constant circles which the earth makes in its journey, all these show the same underlying current beneath them, the current of the whole Nature, which is the real Breath.

The whole universe is going on with a certain rhythm; there is a current which keeps the whole universe going. It is one breath and yet it is many breaths.

There is one tide which has a cycle of forty days and a tide which has a cycle of seven days and of thirty days, and yet at every moment waves are rising and falling. There is a wave under the wave and a wave over the wave. There is a wave of two to the day and also a wave of one to the month. So is it with Breath. One breath and yet many breaths.

Then consider how the trees keep together. One tree and yet its branches and its fruits and its flowers all take different directions. Every branch has a different direction, and yet all keep together. What is it that directs the vigour and the strength of one branch and not the others into that direction; they are all attached to the same tree-stem! Is it not that life-current which runs through it that directs their ways? As long as it runs through a tree it produces fruits and flowers.

So it is with animals and birds and man. The same current of life runs through all. Man is the ideal

being, as the Scripture says. He is ideal because intelligence is given to him to perceive the secret of of this breath, whereas to animals and birds it is hidden. The life of all creatures is mysterious and full of wonder, but man alone is blessed with the intelligence which conveys the power of understanding the secret of the Breath. If there is anything more lasting than our fortuitous life it is this, the secret of our being. It is by this that man is able to master life both here and in the hereafter.

Having understood this truth, mystics have been able to teach that the religion of all religions is the knowledge of self, for the knowledge of self brings the knowledge of life. This life-current which runs through the centre of man's being, attaching mind to body and to all other planes of existence as well, it is this that is all-important. It passes from man's Innermost being out to the body which is the instrument whereby man is able to experience life on the surface. When he has knowledge of this, man begins to realise that "I am not so small as I had thought, not so weak as I had thought; I am much stronger in other planes. I can live much longer than I could on the physical plane. I can see myself in all the different planes by means of that inner knowledge of the Breath."

Therefore, to the mystic, Breath is as a lift—a lift in which he sits and rises up to the first floor and then to the second and then to the third floor,—in fact whithersoever he wishes to go.

The mystery of the sphinx, and the mystery of Burak (which is mentioned in the Koran, chap. 17), has to do with this. When the prophet reached the court or gate of God, the Burak was sent. The Burak was an animal with wings, and he rode upon it in order to reach the gate of the highest heaven. He passed gate after gate as he passed the seven heavens. In the end he arrived at the gate of the highest. What does this allegory mean?

The body of the Burak is this physical body. The wings represent the capability of the breath reaching far and yet retaining its connection with the physical body. The prophet mounting upon his back represents any soul who treads upon the spiritual path. Whoever has courage, whoever has faith, whoever has confidence, whoever has trust, whoever has patience and hope and perseverance can stride upon this Path and make use of the vehicle—the Breath.

If we read the history of Buddha, who was a yogi, we shall find that without yoga and without spiritual meditation (which is accomplished by breath) no-one in this world has ever attained spiritual perfection. The healing power of Christ, the magnetism of Mohamed, the miraculous power of Moses, the charm of Krishna and the inspiration of Buddha—all these were attained by Breath. And how did they obtain that current if it were not that there is the current passing between us on the earth and a Source of Energy, a source of Power and Magnetism?

Is it not plain that breath conveys even the words which go out from our lips to the ears of the hearer? The voice is Breath. The Word is Breath. Without Breath speech cannot be produced. And yet a person may easily accept this and say "Yes, it is true that it is breath that does this," but he will not willingly believe that thought is breath also. He can see the movement of the air which arises from speech, and he wonders if it is meant that thought is also a movement of the air. This is because he does not understand that it is all a life-current,—that is, Breath. It is easily seen when it manifests itself upon the physical plane, but on the higher planes it is not seen; yet it extends as high as the planes. If there is anything that connects man with God, if there is anything that connects the mortal with the immortal, it is nothing but this bridge which we call Breath. It is a bridge whereby to pass from the world of mortality to the world of im-

mortality; it is the bridge whereby immortality passes down to mortality. That life which seems mortal is but the ray of immortal life. That which seems mortal is the globe or shell. It is not life that is mortal, it is the cover that makes it seem mortal!

From the time when man has perceived that there is a secret in Breath, he has thought that he would use his understanding of the secret in order to be able to perform wonders and reach the spirits, master the elements, read thoughts, convey thoughts, and perform any of the coveted psychic or occult phenomena. But to seek to do these things is to give pearls to buy pebbles. How wasteful to spend life in gaining these powers when Breath is the rope that takes us from this mortal plane to immortality, saves us from the struggles and worries of this transitory life, and leads us to the happiness and joy and peace for which every soul longs. If Breath can accomplish these pearls will it not also accomplish the small things, the pebbles, the worldly needs? Yes it will. To have performed a few wonders is nothing after all.

One man is perhaps striving all day to obtain his bread in a comfortable manner; another is always worrying about how to maintain himself and his children. Another is thinking "what can I do to save my fellowman from his trouble?" If we compare these people in order to see who is the greater, we notice that he is greater whose ideal is greater. Whenever we consider the great heroes of the past and present, those whom we admire and to whom we look with hope for right guidance, we shall find that what has made them great has been the greatness of their ideal. The lower the ideal the less the efforts; the higher the ideal the greater the life. If we direct all our intelligence and strength and wisdom to accomplish some little thing, it is only a waste of life. To consider what great things one can accomplish, to seek to do those things that will be most useful and

valuable to others, that is the ideal life. The man who has earned money just to keep himself comfortable, what has he accomplished with his life? If he has just gratified his wish to roam about in a motor-car, to found a comfortable home, to have people waiting upon him, he cannot be happy because he has not accomplished anything with his life. He may possess many houses, he may possess so much in the bank, he may make a great name; but it will amount to nothing in comparison with the man whose power is greater than all wealth, position, and fame. Such a man will be much happier with the small things of the earth, he has gained that peace to which the pleasures and transitory joys of this earth offer no comparison. The one life is like the lips touching a cup of delicious wine; the other life is like drinking the whole cup full of heavenly wine. What a difference between just touching the wine with the lips, and in drinking it! The pleasures of life are like touching the wine. The experience of these pleasures is only like a dream, a passing joy; it comes and goes again. One longs for the joy of that little pleasure to stay; but how can it stay? If you travel for thousands of years you cannot keep the happiness which is external. The only way to obtain the eternal bliss is to do as the mystics do, and rise by the aid of the Breath from plane to plane, finding the greater joy and the greater happiness.

It resembles the taking of a drug. A person may sit in meditation and dream and imagine he is very happy. He may hypnotise himself into thinking he is full of joy. A materially minded person may easily say this against a meditative person. But he must know if this is not hypnotism when a little word of flattery pleases one, when a little silver and gold produces such a change of expression in one's countenance! But a materialist not understanding this will laugh as a mystic and call him a dreamer! If the mystic is a dreamer, what is the worldly man? Is

he not a dreamer too? What produces the joy in these things that are of no importance? If it is good for silver and gold to hypnotise, is it not better when the mystic is hypnotised by his divine ideal of perfection? The silver and gold will certainly be snatched away. At least the mystic's ideal of God will last!

When we consider how this life and our environment can cramp and restrict us, we understand how it is that with all our hopes we still seek solitude, seek to be by ourselves and close our eyes to all the passing things. The life and activity which are directed to experiencing the pleasures of life, the transitory sources of joy and pleasure, all fade away before that which we seek in solitude where we strive to reach the inner and enduring things. Even if our bed is comfortable, if our house contain all the comforts that heart can desire, the mind still goes through all manner of torments and sleep will not come. We may take a little rest and sit still in order to obtain peace but the real trouble never goes. It is to drown this trouble that people take drugs and intoxicants and lose themselves in the pursuit of common things, however undesirable. Every soul strives to obtain some remedy which will enable him to realise the joy and pleasure and peace which his inner life unconsciously seeks; but he cannot get it. If he tries to obtain it through drugs he only becomes a slave to the drugs; if he tries to obtain it through intoxicants, he only becomes a slave to them. If, failing these, he still seeks to gain his desire through other vices, he still fails to obtain contentment.

Come to the mystic, then, and sit with him when you are tired of all these other remedies that you have employed in vain; come and have a glass of wine with him. The mystic wine is the absorption within which removes all the worries and anxieties and troubles and cares of the physical and mental plane. All these are now done away with forever. He it is

who is at rest. He it is who experiences that happiness which no others experience. He it is who teaches the way to attain that peace and happiness which is the original heritage of man's soul.

Character and Fate.

WHEN a person hears that there is an influence exerted by character on fate, he at once wonders how far this can be true, because the people whom he sees are well off and favourably circumstanced—he cannot dare to think that their grade of rank and wealth could be attained by "good character" and its effects.

This is the first stumbling-block which man meets with. When he begins to idolise or admire a character, he has his practical benefit before him. And when he thinks "Am I practically benefited," the heavenly bliss is disregarded. The first thing he thinks about is his *fate*—"if I could meet with a good fate!" "If I could attain to good fortune!" If he gets all he wants by a good character, at once he is disturbed by the disappointment of finding that the actual facts do not agree. If it is business that we instance, surely it is constant application which makes the success and not the personal character.

If we question whether good fortune lies in the achievement of worldly power or in the gain of wealth or position,—if that is all good fortune—then it is very poor. It is the poorest fortune. However high a person is raised in rank, and however great the wealth he is possessed of, whatever position in life he occupies —that has nothing to do with his happiness and satisfaction of mind. It is fate that has to do with happiness and satisfaction.

If a person be living in a palace, his heart may still be in torment from morning to night. Is that enjoying a good fate? He has a thousand difficulties; his own longings are his enemies. Is that a good fortune?

Happiness may exist in a cottage. Yet one who suffers from lack of money says "What a good fortune the rich one has!" But the rich man says to himself, "All they want is to get what they can out of me! they wait till I close my eyes in order that they may inherit what I possess; many minds are constantly working against me."

Is it health? Is health good luck? Is such a one the possessor of a mind at rest? Is his heart satisfied?

If not, then are not these things desirable? Surely they are desirable, but can you say they are the only good fortune that one can attain? Can you say that they are the only things that can satisfy our need in life? It is only when we lack wealth or health that we say "good fortune" lies in them! And when we attain them we still find we are not satisfied! Therefore it must be something else that constitutes good fortune. It is not being very religious or pious. It consists in the attainment of what we wish, what we desire and what we would choose to have.

What *do* we desire? All things that seem to us best according to our evolution these it is that we think we desire and wish to have and consider to be good fortune. But when it comes to be a case of *giving* these things, we are not willing to do so. The whole secret lies there. If we could only grasp the fact that it is for us to give to others that which we expect them to give to us. For instance, suppose we like to be in the company of a righteous or calm person. Our desire is to deal with such a one; in a profession or in business we always think "Oh, if I could have a righteous and just and reliable person to deal with." But when it comes to pass that *we* are put to the test, when it comes to be a case of "are *we* righteous," we fail to meet it. When others expect us to treat them righteously, nicely, kindly, and with stability and reliableness, we forget that it is

or us to show these characteristics. We think so much of our own aims that we forget what it is that we ought to do to others.

The seer therefore teaches that all things that we desire and think beautiful—instead of desiring them from others, we ought to produce them within ourselves. What a task that is! What a great self sufficiency it would be if every country always produced that which it seeks from others! What an independent life it would be to produce within ourselves what we expect to obtain from others. Instead of depending on them for the something we ourselves can give them, we should experience the joy of giving, the joy of being kind to others. What joy and freedom we should find in being ourselves kind to another. However natural it may be to have another love and admire us, are we not dependent? The wife is dependent on her husband's love; the friend is dependent on the friend's love. But in the other case he would be free, be independent; because his joy lies in the love itself, and not in the person. He it is who enjoys life by doing kindness to others. The receiving kindness from others only makes the recipient expect the more. He keeps saying "He is doing this for his benefit; he is not considering *me*; he is blaming *me*; he did not help *me*; he did not deal nicely with *me*"—his life becomes full of grudge because he expects from everybody all the good that he wishes, and yet he does not know that he ought to have that in *himself*; that he should become independent.

Therein lies the secret of character.

It is a wonderful thing that all which we possess in the way of character we transfer not only to our surroundings but also to the animals and birds, such as pets in the house. If we could see exactly to what an extent our character itself acts on our surroundings we should be surprised; the effect is so great. According to science we see that the law of attraction is

such that it always attracts the same elements. When we emit goodness, we cannot have anything else but goodness; and even those who have not that element know it to be of God. All attributes and all goodness that are in the original spirit of God are in man's spirit also. However wicked a man may be, however unruly, however degenerate—if we are quite opposite to him our power will be greater than his; his power will not have the influence on us. The power of goodness conquers badness. Badness is weakness; goodness is strength.

A person who has the habit of losing his temper cannot control another person with the same temperament, when he is near to him, because he has that weakness himself. Therefore the other person loses control also. If the person have control of himself, it is he who will smile and say 'Yes,' be he exposed a thousand times to rages. He will just wait. He who has spiritual control has much control; but he who has it not can control neither spiritual nor physical events. He cannot control his sons and daughters for he never listens to himself first. If he listened to himself, not only would persons but even objects would listen to him. The self will never guide; unless we allow it so to do. We are always astray when we are not guided by the intuitive self. Confusion always follows when we have disappointed our intuition and failure always comes when the control has been lost.

A person's weakness spoils his affairs, for all the different places in which his affairs lie (family, life, business, profession, industry, etc.) are affected by every degradation of character. Do not think that a person of high position is always an ideal character, he would come to ten times higher position if his character helped him.

It is the character which is our teacher. We do not need to speak to people about virtue, kindness, righteousness, for our own righteousness is enough to

make them so. Our goodness is sufficient to make our surroundings good. People are ever seeking psychic power and control, and it is all the time within themselves. "Ourself" is the greatest enemy we have. The horse wants to go where its rider does not. It is the self that will not listen to us and does not act according to our wish. It is not what another person says, or a priest says or a church says; the great teacher is within and without—both. If we are willing to be guided, everything can teach us a lesson. If we wish to see the advantage of sobriety we shall see it among sober people; if we wish to see the disadvantages of lack of sobriety we shall see it among unsober people, if we wish to see the advantage of guidance we shall see it among those who are guided. It is all a matter of experience and study, and our own guide to our true ideal will never fail to guide us aright.

We should do all that we wish others to do to us, and should not do that which we alone wish to do to others, despite others do not wish it done. All that we expect from the world we desire for ourselves. But if we acted otherwise we should become such great personalities in the world; instead of being examples of selfishness we should find our best in our nearest relatives, children and friends.

Life in general is like a plant with thorns. Wherever we wish to take hold there we find a thorn! The more our eyes are opened, wherever we wish to put our hand, there we get thorns (selfishness, because every ego wishes best for itself, and is not ready to give); and if we tried, out of curiosity, tried to become a rose instead of a thorn, we would make our life worth while.

When we begin to see our own faults, we then see how much more we should deserve the name of human beings. Ghalib said "even for man to become man is the most difficult thing of all the other difficulties that are in life." (A madzub is one who has devoted

his entire life to spiritual observation, living always far from the crowd who think him crazy!) One day a madzub, coming from one side, met another coming from the opposite side into the market-place. They made a little bow to one another. And it surprised a bystander to see two crazy people greet one another thus. "What brotherhood there is between crazy people." He went to the place where the one madzub lived and sat there waiting a long time until it should please the madzub to explain himself to him. After a long time the mood of the madzub became such that he would speak to him, and he placed his spiritual hand upon the head of this person saying, "My child, go into the bazaar, and look at it, and come back and tell me what you see." So he went back to the city and looked at the crowd and saw all things, and returned full of surprises. He was bewildered beyond expression. "Every face that I see has the appearance of some animal; not a man's face can I see throughout the whole city, except the person to whom you bowed, and your holy self—these two!"

It does not mean that the faces are changed; it does not mean that the visage is different. It means that the garb of humanity, the appearance of the human beings is not enough. If we can distinguish ourselves from other beings—it is only in the things that animals do not do that man can be different from them. When it comes to eating, do not both eat? Both sleep. Both seek comfort. Man does all the things that animals do. Man can only be greater than animals in things that these do not do. And what are those things? Building houses? Birds can do this. Ability to fight? Animals and birds fight! The showing of art and skill? Animals can show these things—think of the spider and how it weaves its web. It is wonderful.

Man was created in order that he might overcome that which animals have not overcome. And what is that? It is the Ego. It is the Ego that makes him

selfish, makes him get the best of his neighbour. This is the only real cause of all the disturbances of life. of all unrest, of all that we suffer, of all the harm that comes to us. The great enemy is the ego, the selfishness, manifested in husband, wife, son, daughter, friend, neighbour, servant.

Seeing how man's selfishness is torturing the world, there is no greater need than to understand that no-one is better than anyone else; that none can rightly think or imagine he can be better than anyone else, or helpful to children or family or surroundings, *until* this one thing is achieved,—the suppression of ego, of selfishness. Do we not fight with one another unjustly,—all because of vanity. "That is my thought; that is mine." "Me" is such a thing that everything but "me" is wrong. What *I* have, no-one shall touch. This is the one thing against which all religious teachers preach (Cf. Jas. iv. 1).

Many think there is a great necessity in sticking to self and self-interest. Yet even if mankind does differ from animals, he resembles them in this, that where there are two dogs, and one has a bone before him—he does not want the other dog to touch his bone. Even though he is satisfied and does not require the bone himself, still he does not wish the other dog to come and touch it! "This is *my* bone; I will have it." And as long as the other dog is afraid, it is all right. But if the other dog is bigger, he will come and take the bone and bite the first dog too. That is the picture of life.

Yet, when we observe the same sort of thing in man, we say "oh, he was so good. I went to him at lunch-time and he was so kind as to ask me to take lunch with him." This is man's feast. The other was dog's feast. This is where man should be different from an animal. An animal will not recognise his mother or father or his birthplace, but man will. After he has grown up he will consider "my mother has taken care of me when I was an infant, and was so

kind to me; and now she is aged, so I will do everything in my power for her." He dwells on all the respect he can show her and how worthy she is of it. At once he shows himself to be man. The animal does not act this way. Hence, in the case where a man does the same as an animal, and does not care for those who did all they could for him in his youth, he shows his lack of humanity. Forgetfulness and lack of appreciation of the care bestowed during childhood is characteristic of the animals.

Even angels bow to Christ, and Christ is the ideal Man. Angels bow to the ideal man. Even when standing on the depths of the earth, he is higher than the angels and heaven, if he can only be man, if he only exhibits humanity. "Ye are the salt of the earth;—and if the salt have lost its savour . ." (Matt. 5.) explains that man is the ideal manifestation, higher than mineral, vegetable, animal and other kingdoms and even higher than the angels. If he loses the sense of humanity, who is to come and teach him? *He* is the one who is able to teach!

Man is the father of humanity. If the father lose his way, where shall the children go? How much depends on the preceding generation. It is to this that we always look for prosperity, for success, for the coming of the nation, or country, or race, or family.

The real welfare to be sought is not the keeping of so much money in the bank, so many houses built, such and such an education at the university; it is the benefit to the future that is the guide. Parents should think of the welfare of the child even before it is born. The child will show that which he has inherited, but how few parents think of that!

Our rest, our peace, our harmony, our tendency to all good and beautiful actions and things are the wealth that we can reserve for the child. The parent should know what psychic influences he and she can transmit to the children. You are the father, you

are the mother; you are just like the planet which controls the souls and the spirits of that planet. You are the living planet. Your influence is much greater upon your children.

The father thinks that if he does such a thing, the child will do the same. "I must make my child follow my footsteps." This is the Fate. Is it not the fate of nation or race or family or individual? To have their generation as ideal as they wish, that is the best Fate.

People give their lives for the new generation, to the new hope. Should not one see that what matters is that the lives of the children should become better? The leaders of a town, the leaders of a city are looked to for the picture which these people are to follow. How can we prove ourselves fit for all these positions? The position that has a leadership can only be filled after training oneself, and not someone else.

What an atmosphere one can create by one's character! What control one person can have on another's character! "Where are you going?" says one; "I am going to the library" says the other. His answer expresses truth and strength. But another person, who is going where he knows his father does not want him to go, his reply is with hesitation, and he falters out the same words "I am going to the library." The same words are used, but there is no strength in them, no effect.

What power character gives, what power truthfulness gives; what power is lost when the character of the prospective act is dubious. What fear the murderer goes through! He is himself half-murdered before he commits the act, and after committing the act he is in a worse condition than the one he has murdered. His fear, his conscience, his kindness, his justice, his reason—all are in conflict, and he is himself half-killed before he kills the other.

The power of character is the power of an army. With Christ there was an army of angels. With

Mahomet there was also an army of angels. He stood, and thousands of people were running. When an enemy came near to the great Khalif to behead him, the enemy was afraid. But this fear was simply the power of control. The personality shows that which has been sown in it. One cannot pretend to be righteous and good unless his spirit has practised it and that strength has really come. The appearance and one's atmosphere can tell what one is, because man is the picture of his thoughts. Whatever he thinks, whatever he is about, that speaks in his atmosphere, in his voice, in his movements. In everything he expresses himself as he is, how far he has evolved, and how far he has not evolved. Whatever he is, that he shows.

How great the influence is! There is the story of a boy who was sent to Bagdad across a desert, after his mother had sewn a few gold coins in his blanket, telling him to keep it safe and not open it till he reached the city. This was a precaution against robbers, for there were no trains or ships or caravans; it was necessary to travel alone and on foot. When this lad arrived in the forest, the robbers met him. But he was trained to tell the truth, and so when they said "Have you any coins, any gold, any silver" (thinking he would not have many, being only a little boy) he answered "Yes, I have." His conscience would never permit him to answer "No." "Where are they?" they ask. "They are sewn in this blanket," he says. But the very fact of his showing they were sewn in the blanket won the robbers' hearts and made them righteous themselves. They said "We would have stolen them had you not told the truth," and let him go free.

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If a person thinks that God is all, and the whole world is mine, he does not worship God, because God is all and God is beautiful. "God is Beautiful and

He loves beauty'' says the Quran. And as His being is in us, we are supposed to love beauty also.

What is beauty? Not only the external beauty, but the beauty of personality, the beauty of character —that is the real beauty. If we would not worship it, we should not admire it in other people. We cannot appreciate anything without beauty of character.

All gains, whether material, spiritual, moral or mystical—are all gains in answer to one's own character—and if we have no gains we are deprived of them only by reason of our own character.

Truth comes to man's soul and yet Truth is not the exclusive property of creed, caste, or race. We are all the children of God, the Father-Mother Spirit of the whole being. And we ought to be in such a feeling of brotherhood as to exchange helpful thoughts one with another all the time (Cf. Prov. 27, 17). We can take love and guidance from one another. Speech is not so great a help as the contact. The privilege of meeting one another is great (Cf. Heb. 10, 25). When souls meet one another, what truth they can exchange! It is uttered in silence, yet always surely reaches its goal!

When God wants to destroy a thing He gives it into unworthy hands.

Gain and Loss.

TO the view of a Mystic neither is gain a gain or loss a loss. For that which appears to be a loss at one time, at another may appear to be a gain. The more deeply we think about it, the more we see that in every gain there is a loss, and in every loss there is a gain. That which seems to be a gain yesterday may prove to be a loss to-morrow, and that which is a loss at one time proves to yield a gain at another. Consequently, the Mystic realises the joy of the gain and the sorrow of the loss in their right aspect; he discerns what it is that turns a gain to a loss, or converts a loss to a gain. The more deeply we consider the subject, the more do we discern that there are certain gains which are only momentary because material; that to attain them we may have sacrificed a greater gain. Of course if we do not see that greater gain, we do not mind the loss. ("If ignorance be bliss, t'were folly to be wise"). We can only see what we have lost or what we have gained after we have discovered whether the gain we have sacrificed really was a greater one or not.

Every experience in life has three aspects:

(1) That in which it is in the state of a motive.
(2) That in which it is in the process of achievement.
(3) That in which the experience is an accomplished fact.

In the first form, where the experience is as yet only in the form of a motive, we can have no clear conception as to whether it is a gain or a loss. We start out for instance, with the thought "I desire to start a business, in this business I shall be profited." That represents the initial motive. The next step will be the actual building up of the business. It is now that

the gain or the loss becomes more clearly perceptible. But the gain or loss is most clear after the business is accomplished. The experience is now realised. Hitherto the person has not realised the benefit or otherwise but in the final stage he is able to form a true estimate as to whether the idea of his life has led to gain or loss.

In life we discriminate two things: the real and the false. We think more of the real, and less of the false. We discriminate between imitation gold and real gold. We pay more for the real gold because it is more lasting. The two samples of gold may be equally bright; hence it is evident that the value we attach to things is in proportion to their lasting power. Similarly, if we could see what things in life are lasting or passing, we should discriminate between real loss and false loss, real gain and false gain. The gain or loss which is momentary is not real. So too, joy or sorrow is a momentary state; the joy over a gain to-day may prove to be a sorrow to-morrow. If we knew the realities we should never grieve over the loss of any things which experience shows to be only of transient character.

We on the one hand, are working for our own individual benefit and interest; but, on the other hand, there is a universal Power which is more mighty than ourselves, and more just in its working. When these two Powers, the kaza or universal, the kadar or individual, are working harmoniously, things come right. But when they clash, that which is thought right by kaza will happen without regard to what kadar may think right or wrong. Those who know this and harmonise their will with kaza (the universal will) begin to experience divine impulses and they begin to feel every time what is and what is not harmonious in the kadar also. To such as these there come fewer failures in life. Life is easier because they swim with and not against the tides.

Our sense of justice is partial because it is obscured

or shadowed by our likes and dislikes, by our personal interests and disinterests in people and things.

In the Bible it is written "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." If our gain is in all objects of a momentary nature our heart will find no gain in this life or in the hereafter. Those who trust in momentary gain must accept the inevitable disappointment both here and in the hereafter, Everybody in this world is selfish, for is it not true that the sages who renounce that which is valued by worldly people, after all only take up that which they understand to be really the greater gain! The only difference between their action and that which seems entirely selfish in those who are not sages is that they sacrifice that which they perceive to be a false gain. For anyone to do otherwise is to be like the dog which was ever running after its own shadow. The privilege of having life on earth in this delicate human vehicle is too great to risk wasting on something which will leave one the loser in the end, however rich and ample the false gain may appear. What gain is it to have the object gained snatched from our hands at the last? What gain is it to have an object which has to be constantly guarded and watched against the rapacity of others? Everyone is on the watch to take your gain away and make it his; and this he can do with every transient gain. We always desire dependable objects and friends. It is our nature to long for something we can depend on for life. Our own nature teaches us that if we realise our life's desire (which we consider important) we realise only transient things. Has not this war shown us how artists lose their art, poets their poetry, kings their thrones, and many a man falls from his heaven to the earth,—all in a moment's time? What then, is there in this world that can be depended upon? Have we not seen how parents have even sacrificed their lives in order to give the desired happiness to sons and daughters? Have we not seen that friends that one relies on in their

turn depend on someone else and are disappointed? When we really think upon those things we are bound to see that after all we are only like children in understanding. We think ourselves clever and wise, and yet we do not really think deeply of life after all. Some day we begin to think and then we see ourselves as a parent sees his children's acts. The child thinks its sand and toys are such important things—things that we grown-ups attach no importance to. And we too begin to see how childish our own life is when we assess at their true value these actions and desires wh ch seemed so important to us yesterday. We think little things so important—dignity, ill-treatment, insults, reputation,—and what do they matter in the end? Do we not see people praised and raised up high in vanity and greatness one day, and next day all about them is forgotten?

Before the war every shop in Moscow had the p cture of the Czar in one window, and of Jesus with the Virgin in the other! Within three years what a change! Even a whole race will change its attitude in a moment's time.

The praise, the honour, the love, the kindness—are they lasting, are they dependable? Are we not seeking after wealth or fame or love, or kindness or some help from morning until evening? However evolved we are with our education and experience, yet what are we really seeking? Things that we cannot derive any lasting gain from! From these false things we gain the experience that the things we have hitherto attached importance to and valued are things that do not last. We learn at length that it would be wise to remember that all these objects and ideals and aspirations which we have in life should be judged according to whether they are dependable or not, lasting or not. After we have perceived this truth (that this or that is not to be depended upon) we find that it is not necessary to renounce them all, to give up all things in life. You can be in the crowd just as well as in seclusion in

the wilderness. You can have all good things—wealth, friends, kindness, love to give and love to take—once you have learned not to be blinded by them, learned to escape from disappointment, learned to escape from repugnance at the idea that the things are not as you would want them to be. You still undertake your business, you attain your wealth, you follow out all those things, but now your eyes are wide open; before, they were blind. This is the teaching of life. Thus it is that when you study life in the East, you will find that a Sufi may be a king or he may be a fakir. The word Sufi means seer. A Sufi may still be a king! It is not the actual literal renunciation, it is the personal abandonment of belief in the importance of transient things.

A person who pretends to be unselfish is generally foolish-selfish. It is the wise-selfish who are right, and still they bless themselves all the same. They are selfish it is true, but they are selfish with true wisdom. They think out what it is in life that will benefit them most. The foolish-selfish man never collects money, and thus has never any to give. The wise-selfish man will obtain money in order that he can express his generosity with that which he has collected. He who remains a pauper all his life has never achieved anything for anyone. Therefore he is wise who not only understands what is real gain and what is false, but also understands the price there is to pay for the gain. What determines our success is the thought whether my gain is of more value than the price I have to pay for it, or, whether the price I have to pay is greater than the gain I can obtain. He who perceives this clearly has learnt the true business of life very well.

For every gain then, there is a need for sacrifice. To gain anything, you have to sacrifice something. To pursue two gains is to lose both. Therefore it is necessary to decide once and for all what is real gain and what is false. Follow the real. Leave the false.

If there is such a thing as saintly renunciation, it is that of renouncing small gains for better gains, not for no gains, but with open eyes to see what is better and what is worse. Even if the choice has to lie between two momentary gains, one would always be found to be more real and lasting; that one should follow for the time. Take the torch of wisdom to show you your path through life, and you will end by realising what is really profitable in life and what is not.

Stilling the Mind.

BEFORE one can understand the use of stilling the mind one must consider the discrepancy between advising that the mind be stilled and advising that the body be not stilled. Life is nothing but an activity in all things. Inactivity of the body takes away its vigour and strength; the muscles do not have a chance to develop; the lazy inactive person is always suffering from indigestion or some such ailment. How then can it be but that when the mind is made "still" it will not suffer in vigour and strength? Would not stilling the mind stupify a person? If the voice is to develop it must be used by singing exercises and carrying out certain practices; if the muscles are to develop they must be used. How then can stilling the mind create power of mind?

There is great truth in this objection. Stilling the mind would stupefy and render it powerless did the person not understand life's secret, life's law. It is true that in life on the physical plane our exercises and activity of the day must give place to rest, comfort and sleep during the night. If our body does not receive that rest it can never flourish. We need more rest than activity. We need more comfort than toil. And if it is not given the health of the person becomes unbalanced, and it follows that as much as it is necessary for the body to have comfort and rest after toil, so much is it necessary for mind to have rest and peace after thinking and working.

Indeed the mind is composed of finer elements, whereas the body is made of grosser elements, and that makes a great difference in activity. The higher the plane of existence the more active, the lower the plane, the less are the activities. That is why the mind is

naturally more active than the body. Therefore, if after toil rest is necessary, how much more does it apply to mind than to body? We usually take rest at will whenever circumstances allow us to, on behalf of our body—we recline on the couch or in the armchair after coming from the office or work, and at night we rest and go to sleep—but when do we give a rest to the mind? The mind's rest is equally necessary as that of the rest of the body and yet we always keep it in action. It is constantly at work even if our body is resting. Even if the body is sleeping, the mind is producing dreams and is constantly at work. How many people stand at their work for a whole day, during which the mind is no less busy with the works on the physical planes (that is, the body), for mind works with body; and yet they work with the mind the whole night long. The body is having rest and comfort, but not so the mind. Even in the armchair they are still imagining, still working with the mind. The mind has no leisure; it is perhaps worrying or planning or thinking over the struggles and anxieties of which life is so full. And even if the body is asleep there is still the constant working of the mind going on. There is hardly ever a time when the mind is at rest except when nature gives it, by its being too exhausted to work any more; the mind says "Oh, I will have a good sleep." And if it has two hour's sleep only, still one wakes up with such a joy and strength that all the world seems new. If there have been dreams, one can only say "Yes, I have been to sleep, but I do not feel rested," because that part of the being has not rested.

All this goes to show the great practical need for the mind to be at rest, for the mind to be stilled. Those who make it a principle that work is always an advisable thing are one-sided. Balance lies in perceiving that work and rest are equal needs to good health, both physical and mental.

The work of the body is sometimes kept under the

control of man, but he does not keep the work of the mind under his control. This is not because he cannot do so, it is because he never thinks about it. Does one ever stop to ask oneself "why was I thinking? was there any purpose in those anxious worried thoughts?" Was it not that the mind was just allowed to go where ever it wanted? While sitting quietly in a chair, were not the thoughts active with things that have nothing to do with one's life, with things that do not matter in the least either to oneself or to anyone else's life? It was just a waste of energy.

The more the mind is allowed to go without purpose the more likely is it to become a vehicle or machine which all manner of influences around it—spiritual influences, spirit obsessions, other human beings—will employ instead of the owner. If the user of that mind is a proper person then it may perhaps act properly, but if it is an improper person who uses it then the work of the mind is wasted. In any case it would not be a fulfilment of the purpose of his life. This purpose is to learn mastery, not to be the vehicle for others to use. He who does not direct his own mind lacks mastery.

All this shows that the very first lesson that the mystic learns in life is the training of mind. It is not stilling the mind. Stilling comes afterwards. The first thing is to train, to check the activities. This is illustrated in the words 'imagination' and 'thought.' Sometimes we use the word 'thought' when we should use the word 'imagination;' sometimes 'imagination' when we should use the word 'thought.' Both are different forms of activity of mind. In the first case, the imagination, the activity of mind, is uncontrolled, is without our intention, is not directed towards a certain purpose. A person may be imaginative, and his imaginations may come out like beautiful flowers. But if there is no personality the flowers are no use to the plant; that beautiful things have been produced is no credit because no-one knows from what

source the imaginations have come. But in the case of thought, this is directed imagination. It is a controlled activity of mind. That is why we cannot call a thoughtful person imaginative, nor can we call an imaginative person thoughtful. He is thoughtful whose mind is directed by his will, whose mind fulfils his intentions, whose mind is under the control of one's intention.

Imagination may be very beautiful, or not; it may be right or it may be wrong. Many persons who are praised as being imaginative may really be in the first stage of insanity. Those who have given deep thoughts to the world are those only who have controlled the activity of their minds. Those whose minds are working mechanically like a machine or just re flecting the activity of those around them may appear to be living beings, but the mystic would say differently, because it is not till a person has gained mastery over his mind, till he is above this activity, that he is a ruling power,—a true 'person.'

When we think about it, we find that all the things that are accomplished in this world are accomplished by the power of mind. As it is written in the Vedanta, "the world is the creation of the mind of Brahma." That is, it is the thought of the Creator which has created the world. And if it is the Creator's thought that has created this world, we ourselves are not far from Him. The soul of man is the spirit of the Creator, and therefore has within it the same power of creating by the power of mind as his Creator has. Whatever man creates in science, in art, in phenomena or wonder-making, in poetry, in music, in pictures in everything that he brings into being, it is all achieved by the power of mind.

What is man? Is not his soul divine substance? The very word man is from the Sanscrit 'manu' which means 'mind.' Man is what is mind is, what he thinks. 'As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is." (Prov. 23, 7.) Even the future as well as the past is

what he thinks because he himself becomes the image of his thoughts. God created man in the image of his thoughts. If there is any self of which one can say 'this is man' it is mind. The three words manna, manu, manusha, in Sanscrit show that man is his mind. is from his mind, is the controller of the activity of mind. Should he not control his mind he is not a master but a slave. It lies in his own mind whether he shall be master or whether he shall be slave. He is slave when he neglects to be master. He is master if he cares to be master.

Mastery lies not merely in stilling the mind, but in directing it towards whatever point you desire, in allowing it to be active as far as you wish, in using it to fulfil your purpose, in causing it to be still when *you* want to still it. He who has come to this has created his heaven within himself; he has no need to wait for a heaven in the hereafter, for he has produced it within his own mind now.

There is a story of a Murshid and a Mureed. The Mureed said: "Oh, teacher, I would like to see heaven." The teacher says "Yes, this is the way you should meditate in order to see heaven." So he went and did so, but the vision of heaven which he had was not as described in the scriptures—that it is a place where one enjoys nothing but comfort and luxury, milk and honey, marble halls and robes of white, beautiful gems and garlands of jewels, wreaths of flowers, and the waving of palms. But he could not see anything of that. So he asked himself, "has the Murshid perhaps shown me a wrong heaven, or have the prophets given a wrong message in the scriptures?"

So he went back to the Murshid saying 'Now I would like to see hell.' The Murshid says 'Yes, this is the way you should meditate in order to see hell.' And then he did this and he saw in a trance that there was certainly a place, but there was no fire or snakes or serpents or thorns or tortures or imps or flames such as have been told people for ages. So he could not

understand whether his vision was right or wrong, and he went back to the teacher and said 'I have seen in this way: I have not seen in heaven the things that are promised, nor have I seen in hell the things which are foretold as being there.'

"Oh," the teacher says, "All the things promised for hell you will have to take them there from here! they are not kept ready for you, you will have to bring them with you. If you take sorrows with you you will find them there; if you take hatred you will find it there. Your mind brings the record of the gramophone, and if you use a harsh voice, the instrument produces a harsh note; if beautiful words and things it will sing beautiful words and things. It will produce the same record that you have experienced in life. Indeed you have not to wait till after death in order to experience it, you are experiencing it just now!" Everything is reproduced before us now if we would only listen to it and perceive it. Every good or bad word or deed is reproduced before us, though it seems as in a dream.

Did we watch life keenly we should see how true this is. Joy, sorrow, love, all depend on our thought, on the activity of our mind. If we are depressed, if we are in despair—it is still the work of our mind. Our mind has prepared that for us. So, too, if we are joyful and happy, and all things are pleasant—that also has been prepared for us by our mind. It is only when our mind works without control that unhappiness, sorrow, trouble, pain, or whatever we experience comes without our intention. No one could wish to create hell for himself, all would create heaven for themselves if they could, and yet how many allow their minds to create these things for them regardless of their own intention.

The control of the activity of mind is called Concentration, in the language of the mystics. The meaning of this word is often not rightly understood. People are apt to think that concentration means closing the

eyes. But you may close the eyes for hours and still the thoughts keep coming like a moving picture. You are never at rest, never at peace, the anxiety and sorrow do not disappear just because you close the eyes. It is concentration that does that. Concentration is activity of mind in the direction desired; our desire directs in which way the mind is to be active; the mind acts according to our wishes.

How difficult it is to do this is best known by those who have tried. As soon as the mind is still and inactive it begins to jump and run away from control. It runs into every direction but that in which you wish. You hold it; it slips away. Not till one begins to try and concentrate does one see how uncontrollable and unruly the mind is.

This truth is pictured very well in the story of Ramayana, the great Hindu Scripture which relates about Rama's two children Lahu and Kusha (p. 64). The myth explains the condition of the human mind as like that of an unruly horse. Is it not always running hither and thither; is it not like a wild horse running from place to place, further away every time you think you are able to touch it? When a person thinks "I will not think of anything" do not a thousand thoughts come? That shows that it is of the nature of the unruly horse for the control of which skill is required.

The key to the problem of controlling the mind, the key of concentration, is given to us by our elder brother—the Murshid among the Sufis, the Guru among the Vedantas, who is a teacher with experience of the horse, having trained it and mastered it. He says "If you are without a proper friend you will perhaps succeed in catching the horse, and perhaps you will not. But if you know the proper way in which to go about catching it you will not be a long time in doing so." That is why it is so necessary to have a method of concentration. Mystics, yogas, fakirs, ascetics, have a method; and by learning that method the concentration is easily obtained. When the mind is con-

trolled and made into a vehicle, absolutely in our hand, working as *we* desire, then we can still it also.

The benefit of stilling is so much greater. If one only grasped the benefit of perfect stillness, even only of the body! You have seen a symbolism of that stillness in the statues of Buddha or of Krishna, or in the idols of the Hindoos. What an effect that has! Compare it with the effect of a person who comes into your presence, but is always active, rubbing his hands, moving about, raising his shoulders, making grimaces, tapping on the table, scratching, fidgeting in some way or another. Does he not make you fidget? The whole atmosphere becomes disturbed. Why? Because there is an intense activity of mind making its effect on the body. The body and mind are both in an unrestful state, which passes on to everyone who is in the place, for it produces unrest in the whole atmosphere. We may not be conscious that this is so, but unconsciously we feel disturbed.

The great comfort that one finds after waking from a deep sleep cannot be compared with anything in the world, but more than that, the mystic sees in sleep the symbol of a great mystical state. Rumi, the Sufi teacher of Persia, says "Oh sleep, in thee I find the divine bliss. Thou makest patients forget their illness; thou makest kings forget for the moment that they are in a palace; thou makest the prisoners forget for a moment that they are in captivity. What bliss, what joy of bliss when the soul is freed from its limited presence, from the presence of those different aspects of life that are keeping it captive!"

Sleep is the time when the soul is free. That is why deep sleep is so great a state to the mystic. In the East they say, when a person is asleep do not wake him. It is a great sin so to do. Of course in the West they cannot say this because if you do not go to your work in the morning what then? It would be a great sin if you did not wake him!

If there is such comfort and joy and so great a secret

of heavenly peace during sound sleep, so there is a greater joy and peace and inspiration when the mind is stilled. The mind is so like water that our poets always call it "the sea," "the ocean." The nature of water is that as you look in it you see a face reflected there, your own image. If the water be not still, the face is not clear. When the water is still, everything reflected in it is clear. So it is with mind.

When the mind is stilled, it hears what another person says; it can think upon any subject that it sees; and when the person is developed the mind can hear even what is said from the other side; yes, even what God says from heaven.

Therefore these, the ears of whose heart have listened to the word of God have first accomplished stillness in their life. And what an atmosphere such persons can produce, what effect their presence has; it is more than healing, more than medicine, A man with perfectly stilled and comforted and rested mind will at once raise up another who is going through distress or restlessness or pains or ill-temper or worry or anxiety. The very presence of one whose mind is stilled gives such hope, such inspiration, such sympathy, such power and life. All the heavenly properties run so smoothly and freely from the person whose mind is stilled that his words, his voice, his presence all react upon the minds of others; and as he stills his mind so his very presence becomes healing.

Mental Creation.

SO absorbed are persons in this visible creation that they very seldom think of the value of that other creation which exists within themselves. Those things that tempt, that attract attention, that are of interest,—all these are pursued by so many persons, and therefore they become limited and unaware of that other creation which goes on unconsciously within.

Really speaking, every man is a world within himself. But how little man reflects about it! He is always conscious of being just like a drop in the ocean, whereas he does not know of the other state of being, in which he is the ocean and everything else a drop.

There is a passage in one of the sacred books relating how God created the earth, and then created the heavens. What does this mean? Was the heaven created after the earth? The meaning is that this creation which is around us is first impressed upon the mind and then the mind has created its own world —its own heaven. It is the creation of mind, a higher world, yet within ourselves,—and this world may be heaven or it may be the opposite. As Omar Khayyam writes, in his poetry, "Man's heaven is the vision of fulfilled desire, and hell is the shadow of a soul on fire." Which all shows that the desire is the source of heaven, and its fulfilment; at the same time it is mental fire and disappointment or worry or anxiety or torture that is the shadow of the soul on fire.

Centuries ago, Zoroaster taught that "there are three kinds of sin," and three kinds of virtue: a virtue in thought, in speech, in action.

A person always takes virtue in action as virtue, sin in action as sin, never thinking about virtue and sin in

speech or thought also. Sometimes man's thought is stronger than his speech or action. It is the experience of every mystic and every person who has gone through the Path that the thought power is much greater than that of speech or action. In our everyday life we find that if we think of a person bringing a certain book or flower we desire, we often find he comes to see us, bringing this book or flower with him. You had not expressed the desire, and yet it has been done. Such is the power of thought, the creation of mind. "Thoughts are things," as it has been said,—but they are more. Thoughts are *Beings*. They are as living beings as we ; they work as we work. They have life in them. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (J. 6, 63). The spirit is the real life. Man is spirit. The body is matter. The body can generate, but cannot mind generate? It is the generation of mind which we call thought or imagination. Thought is controlled. The other is not controlled.

There is a saying in Sanscrit: "There are numberless gods and yet there is one God." This means that as every planet is a world, every mind is a world; it is a living world.

The question is, if we make our world and mould our life, why should we have unhappiness, why have troubles in life, why have failures in life? The answer is, "it is the fault neither of the Creator nor of the world. It is the fault of our ignorance; it is the lack of knowledge." Buddha pictures this lack of knowledge in this way: It is as when you are clinging to the branch of a tree, and there is the thick darkness of night so that you cannot see what is beneath you—whether it is land or sea—then you are always afraid of falling. You keep on clinging to the tree, and yet you are suffering with the fear of how long it will be before you have to let go. How long can I cling to this branch? Yet under your feet there is nothing! Such is life until Light comes. Then it is like the coming of

the sun. When the sun rises you find there is no water, there is not even land. For the land is just beneath your feet!

The land of immortality is so far from us. But when the sun of knowledge arises we see that it is near, so near! Once man knows that, he need not be taught morals or virtue; he knows what is best for him, whither to go; he knows his own creation. He knows that if he creates hideous spirits in his thoughts they will become monsters, and will work against him, and will ruin his own life. But if man creates the spirit of love and kindness, others will help him in his want, and he is always surrounded by love and kindness.

Once people realise this their life becomes different; they become the healers of men; they sympathise with the trouble of another; they serve in the difficulty of another; they seek to know if they cannot do something, cannot help in some way. A word may help. A thought of kindness and of sympathy will help. Whatever they do to others they do to themselves because every thought of kindness or goodness and sympathy has generated a world of sympathy around it and such persons cannot be without it. If they go to a land where no one knows them or understands them, they can draw sympathy and love, if they have created that within themselves.

That shows how important it is to be careful of what we say. Act under the spell of anger, say such things as "I don't wish to see his face," any evil words—and the person wishes he had not said or done such things after the spell has gone; not even for an enemy does he wish to have said these things. But at the time he did not know that what he has created lives. That which he has created he will be afraid of, and it will become his enemy as well as the enemy of the person against whom his wrongful thought was directed. Not only that, but he will generate many more of the same kind. Once one bad thought is created, in the spirit of anger or annoyance, there are a thousand other

spirits created out of it—a world may be created by giving an outlet to one single weakness!

All that we collect and gather in the external world for our happiness and comfort (as perhaps an estate) is limited, not even a thousandth part of this world that we possess can we call really our own kindgom, our world. But our mind can create and can collect numberless thoughts and impressions which all make up its real world. All our possessions, all that we collect in life, all these things which we have to leave one day are momentary, but that which we have created from our thought, from our mind,—that lives.

A person thinks, "Oh, some day I should like to build a factory." At this time he has no money, no knowledge, no capability but a thought has come that "some day I should like to build a factory." Then he has thought of something else. Perhaps years pass but that thought has been working constantly through a thousand minds, and a thousand sources prepare for him that which he had once desired. If a person can look back in his life at what he had thought of in different times, he will find that the line of Fate (which in the East we call Kismet, Destiny) is formed by our thought. Thoughts have prepared for us that happiness or unhappiness which we experience. The whole of mysticism is founded on this.

If thoughts can accomplish this, so can love or imagination or even a dream can accomplish according to the impression which it has. Some thoughts are as things, as objects, other thoughts are as beings. Some thoughts are as angels by our side, and some are as devils. They are all round us, either helping us towards the accomplishment of the objects before us or drawing us back from those things we wish to accomplish.

One person thinks, and perhaps the result of his thought is very feeble; another has thought to-day, and to-morrow the desire is fulfilled. Why is this? It is because of the power of thought. In the thought of

one person there is more life, in that of another there is less life. The difference between an object and a living thing is that there is more or less life in them. But we call that life where there is consciousness and activity; we call that an object which lacks intelligence and consciousness. Yet, really speaking, both are alive. A person with a weak will has no strength in his thought. If he thinks a thousand times it has no effect because he has not that vitality or energy which is necessary for thought to live.

What is the vitality which gives life to the thought? It is the same in man, in vegetable, in mineral. In the one case the life is on the surface, in the other it is covered. That is why we call them things in the one case, and beings in the other. So there are dead thoughts, and there are living thoughts. To which class a thought is to belong depends on the power called will-power. When there is will-power, the word is both spoken and done. This idea is expressed by the word Kalpa Vraksha, "the tree of desire." The story is that whoever should happen to come under this tree and sit down for a moment will have whatever wish he may desire fulfilled. Yet nobody knows where this tree is to be found. The tree is the mind. Its root is the heart. That which gives power to thought, gives spirit or life to thought is Feeling. A man without feeling is as dead; with feeling he is living, and so is his thought. Thought with feeling is a much greater power than thought without feeling. Merely to say "I like your art so much" will have no effect when there is no feeling behind it. It is just a string of words. There is no life in it. But when those words are uttered with feeling, they go through your heart also; the thought becomes living.

There have been great people whose loving thoughts would make anybody live, who are able to make anybody alive, who can impart life, and can heal. They have left their thoughts behind them and people have treasured them as scriptures, as holy books.

They have taken them for a religion. Such thoughts can never vanish nor die, such a long life has been given to them. Whatever form their thoughts have taken—music, prose, poetry, aphorisms, groups of words that will never die—they will live for ever. There are others who have not known the value of this creation, who have not known the immortal character of this creation by mind; they pass through life without knowing the value of the creation by mind. Such persons are foolish, stupid, grumbling all the time about people, and criticising others.

There is a Hindustani poet who says "Beware before you speak a word, you do not know that this world is a dome, and that in a dome there is an echo." So, in this world, whatever one utters is re-echoed. If a good thought is sent to a person, he may not know of it; yet you have sent a good thought, a thought of kindness, sincere sympathy and love; you may not tell him; you may not see him. But even after ten years you will find something was prepared for him; something has made close the friendship. He will know that you have thought about him. The secret of this is that life is one. In it all these phantoms live and move, and we think that everybody is a different life, and yet there is only one life—which the mystic calls God, Who cannot be divided.

The Sufi says that man is not a part of God, for how can God be divided? Can you divide space? Since space cannot be divided, how can God be? How can this one life be divided? There is no division. There is no wall between any two people in this world. The hymn says:

> "I know no life, divided,
> O Lord of Life, from thee;"

Whether the thought be of bitterness, or sympathy, or love or kindness, it reaches the other person. When the thought has feeling behind it, it has life whether the feeling be of bitternesss or of kindness. If it be bitterness, it will destroy. But the consequence of

such a thought will be that it will return to the giver; it will surely rebound; it will surely return to him who sent it. Whether it was bitterness, or whether it was kindness it will equally return, but more than that, that thought generates as surely as do germs and worms One thought of love makes a thousand beings of love and kindness come around one.

There is a prophecy in the Bible that when the next Teacher will come He will bring ten thousand holy ones in His army? What does this mean? Does it mean ten thousand visible people? No, there will be numberless thoughts of goodwill and service to mankind, which will become his army.

Externally we are a single being, but internally we are a world. As vast as is the world around us, so vast is the world within. Asif says: "The limitation of the sky and land, cannot be compared with man's heart. If man's heart be wide, there is nothing wider than this." All can be accommodated in it,—heaven, earth, sun, moon, all are reflected in it. It itself becomes the whole. This world becomes as he chooses to make it. If man only knew that! But since he does not know that, the world is not heaven but has become its opposite. We blame others for our sorrows and misfortunes, not perceiving that we ourselves are the creators of our world; that our world has an influence upon our life within as well as upon our life without. For instance, if the self within is blaming a person, he is blamed by everybody else; if he is admiring a person, he is admired by everybody; if he feels guilty with one in the external world, he will feel guilty; if he feels doubt about the right path, he goes through the world in that spirit.

We read in the Scripture how Moses had a word with God on Mount Sinai. The angel Gabriel brought a message to the prophet. What was the angel? What was Mount Sinai? Mount Sinai is the mind of man. God is within it; it is man's feeling that builds a bridge from man's mind to the mount of God.

Rumi says, so beautifully, "there is a flute, one end of which is in the lips of God, and the other end of the flute is in the heart of man." What a beautiful simile! When man's heart is awakened, when the thoughts have become living beings, then where this feeling comes, its current runs from infinite to finite, from the objective world back to the world unseen, from God to man. A current is established. It is man's thought which is the bridge to heaven.

Whatever the thought of man has built it becomes his heaven, say the singers, the Upsawas and fair ones. This is the true heaven. A man with an army of beautiful thoughts is in the Garden of Eden. He has produced a garden within himself. There is a verse of Bedail: "These beautiful gardens and flower-beds, if you wish to have them round you, you need not go and see them in the external world. You need only open the gate of your heart to see them there, and you will enjoy them."

People think such a world is only imagination, only exists in thought, but really this world is the only one that will remain in the hereafter. There will not be any other world, for this physical world will not remain. Every soul is creating a world. However vast a planet may seem in comparison to the mind of man, yet the mind of man is really the vaster. There is a world in this planet. As the Hindoos have said, "Our planet has a god, and man is the god of his planet."

First you must know what you should have, and you must become the master of yourself and of your thoughts, and of your life. Then it will become agreeable and smooth to others, and you will become a blessing to all you meet in this world.

The Attainment of Power.

THE possession of power brings with it the desire to attain more. We can attain everything that we desire, if we only know how! No one attains a higher position unless he follows a something hidden. The tendency to arrive at a perfection is that which causes one to attain a greater perfection. Even if he attains wealth, the person is tending towards perfection. Napoleon attained something hidden which was great and wonderful, if we could only understand it. So a merchant has begun perhaps by selling empty bottles, and ultimately becomes so wealthy as to be able to give colleges, libraries, hospitals, and so forth—which proves there was an inclination to a certain perfection. Even though the ideal be not so very high, the very inclination to attain power is great.

There is a spiritual or psychic or occult or telepathic power. How are we to attain to that?

What is at the back of the soul? Is it not that it must needs say "I *am* a king, but in this mortal casket I have become a pauper?" "I was created free, but in this flesh I am in captivity and have become weak," so said Rumi, the greatest writer. "From an almighty state of being, you have become a helpless being. When you become conscious of spirit, you become conscious of a mighty power hidden, and your spirit is the expression of the almighty Power." The power is in unity, but is lost in variety.

Thus, for instance, if you hold a thing in your hand, you can hold it with strength because all five fingers have united to hold the object. But if you wish to let it be lifted by one finger this one finger may drop it, even though the finger belongs to the same hand. In all aspects of life, unity is power. All religions show

that power is in unity. This is the secret of philosophy.

There are two aspects of unity. (1) the unity of variety (2) unity realising itself. One is heavenly, the other is earthly. You cannot serve two masters. Unity is the only source of happiness. Unity in realisation is far greater than unity in variety.

"When two hearts unite, they can break even mountains." As two fuse in love, the more does intuition grow, the more does one understand whether the other is happy, or pleased, or displeased—what ever distance may separate them. This is nothing but just the unity of the one person with the other. It is clairvoyance. The mother knows the condition of her child at the battle front. She can see him in her dreams. The hearts which are united in love perceive the state of mind of the ones loved. They have not to study mysticism or concentration, for they have natural concentration. The mother does not pretend to meditate; love teaches her meditation to a greater extent than a person attains who pretends to study it. You cannot hold an object in mind, however, when the heart has nothing to do with the object. Pebbles are not made to eat, and therefore you cannot eat them. The mind is never so satisfied with either an object or a being which it does not desire; therefore it is no use to concentrate specially on what the heart does not desire. The heart which *does* desire does not need special concentration.

Nothing gives greater power of confidence than love. If you love a person, you have confidence in that person. Hence the mother is as a god to her child. The hen is the most timid of birds until she has chickens; at that time she is under the spell of love, and would not hesitate to fight even an elephant if he were endangering her brood. That shows the power of love. Can any "charm" or amulet be more powerful than this? The one with a loving heart will travel the furthest.

Power can be attained artificially, by magic, or by

the different laws of the power of sound, or of words, or of concentration. Such power can make a person ill, can make a person run away from the country, can make two hearts separate,—many wonders can be performed by the power of concentration.

We do not exist only as body, but we exist as heart, as soul. If the heart is kept dead all the life, and we give the body all the things it wants—soft cushions, comforts—is this all we need? The heart is still hungering! The heart wants to see that it is living. The heart longs to be alive. It has been created to love, and it is not loved; it wants to melt. But as it wants all the love and kindness to come to it, it withholds giving when the time comes for *it* to give. We take the love all the time during which the love is to be taken, but when the time comes to give, we do not give. Is love to give? Is love *Trade*? Until this is known, it is impossible to understand love.

To love is to be the possessor of a heart,—not as a demon possesses a person: but when a person comes to be 'alive,' this means that he has become the possessor of a 'heart.' Whose heart? "heart" is that factor of our being, that factor of our thinking which feels within itself a longing to express love; it is an awakening to love and to a feeling of love. This is the factor which produces thought; this is the factor which produces feeling. In this lies the creative power! All power which one can possibly wish to attain throughout life is reached by this means.

How can power develop in the absence of unity? Suppose everyone had magnetic power. They would make all the money they could from their clients. Would it be just for some to possess the power of making money, and for others to be perpetually their victims? No. Hence mysticism was kept hidden in the interest of the safety of others. Those who are not worthy of the hidden knowledge would use their power for selfish purposes—for himself and for those who belong to him. If ordinary persons *had* this

power, you could not even compare them with the Devil. Rishis, saints, and sages, have experienced the selfishness of man. They know it would be bad for the world if this hidden knowledge were revealed. And *who* deserves to be illuminated with this knowledge? He deserves it who develops his soul in the thought of unity; and he alone receives.

The progressive steps of enlightenment in power are shown when the person transfers his ambitions to his family; and then from his family to his city, from his city to his nation, from his nation to the whole world, and from the whole world to the whole universe!

When the joy of each person he ever sees is *his* joy, when the pain of every person is *his* pain, then he is becoming a conqueror, is attaining power!

A Madjub was wandering in the street at night, and a policeman asked him if he was a thief, he said "Yes," whereon the policeman took him to the police station and put him in a cell for the night. The Madzub was as happy there as ever. Every seer has the same point of view.

What the Power of Breath can do.

BREATH, being the secret of all being, is the most important of all things. Whether you have a nice body or not has nothing to do with it. If you gain in weight, you are only getting your coat heavier; but our true being is the breath. If you put away your coat, there is nothing. If we put away our body, we are nothing. When the breath has left the body, the body is useless. Therefore the importance of our being lies in the breath.

Breath is 'God.' If God is manifest in anything, it is in breath. The activity of our physical being depends on our breath. This keeps up the rhythm of the pulse and the rhythm of the beats of the brain. The centres are kept up by the rhythm. If the rhythm stops the centres stop. As the tick of the watch, so the swing of the breath. According to the rhythm, so is the condition of the body. Disorder in breath means illness.

In anger, the rhythm of breathing is much quicker, even so much as to make speech impossible. "Speechless with anger" is proverbial. Therefore the breath acts on the mind as well. The lion, the leopard, and other fierce creatures have a very irregular breath; there is no rhythm; they are short lived. The cobra never becomes excited; it breathes slowly, and attracts his food from any distance by mere concentration of will. He is very long-lived.

Breathing is the effect of breath. It is really a vibration rising and falling. There is a vibration in all things, in life and birth. In all things there is rhythm. It is the activity of God and nothing else. There are different rhythms for the day, the hour, the minute, the forty days. There is a connection

between this rhythm and the life of the universe;—like so many candles and lamps.

Word—Light—Creation! The Breath is the Word. You cannot utter a word without breath. But a word is double, and breath is not. The sense comes before the sound.

Athletic exercises are really at bottom exercises of breathing. A porter does not become developed because he does not use his breathing for that purpose. He has had exercise without benefit. If the breath did not manifest through the voice, it would manifest in some other way, as the absent sound of thought. Wherever it is directed, it will go. If you do not speak, and yet think the same thought, the breath will travel silently. People think they cannot hear except with their ears, so much are they attached to their physical body. As soon as you are convinced that you can hear without ears, you will do so without speech. You can tell a person is angry without him speaking, because the person reveals it in his whole vibration. The very way a person says 'Yes' tells you whether he is willing or not willing; that is, it depends on the character of the breath at that moment.

People who live a material life, reveal it because the breath becomes material and makes a noise. It has become so dense that it actually makes a noise. In refined persons, the breath is also fine. Cows and camels and buffaloes make a noise when they breathe. This at once shows the fineness or coarseness of the individual. Those who perceive these things can perceive them clearly.

All the different moods that we are in—inclination to laughter or crying, or heaviness, or exaltation, or meditation—all result from the breath. It changes so many times in activity during the day and night. It expresses a certain element (earth, water, fire, air, ether) as it changes. It makes one feel inclined to do certain things in accordance with the element.

All different desires originate in breath; even the character of a person, even his 'luck' all depend on the breath. Those who know the mystery of breath can read the soul. Breath is a link from God to man. Breath is purified by prayer. Fire-worshippers keep fire before them in order to keep their breath in rhythm.

The science of breath is only transmitted by word of voice from the teacher when he sees someone worthy to learn. There are two words which depict the stages of ability—jelal, 'force of breath,' jemal, 'the gentleness of breath'; kemal, 'perfection of breath.'' The latter stage culminates in 'miracles.'

A book is a dead teacher.

People continually send their breath into undesirable centres. It is essential to have a living guide, and not try and study from books. A pure and good life is far better for the breathing. Do not let tranquility be disturbed, and the rhythm of the breath will keep regular, and the mind will keep in good condition, and the body healthy.

Do not be so attached to anything in the world; do not be a slave to anything. Be beyond all desires. The law of cleanliness, the law of balance, good to others, good wishes, good thoughts; keep a high ideal, and keep always wishing to attain the ideal.

By doing these things, the breath itself will become fixed in the same mould.

The Knowledge of Past, Present and Future.

"WHAT need is there of effort in life—if the future is already settled?" says one. Says the business man, "There is no pre-destination, for all things that happen are done by ourselves."

A person may be trying to do good, and nevertheless always finds it turning bad. Such an one asks, "Is there any hindrance by spirits?"

The Sufi studies what darkness is, in order to understand the light. He seeks the uniting link between good and evil. There are two points, but one line joins them! If you seek the point, you will go to the one end or the other, but if you hold the line, you understand the whole! In every problem, you must see the *line* instead of the points. That is Sufism.

The artist paints a picture in three stages: (a) preparatory; (b) stage of action; (c) stage of completion—past, present and future. The first stage is the design of the picture,—that is predestination. We all do this. You are the manifestation of the eternal Sun, and therefore all the attributes of the Creator must be in the creature. Is it not so, that before doing anything we plan it? In our mind we have created. The Creator acted so, and so do we. We do it with a pen. He does it with "Nature." His art is Nature. The Quran says "We have taught Man by the pen of our nature." It is our nature to create and by creating our art in Nature, by this we can see the skill of our painting. The art that we draw is according to the nature of us, the creator.

Secondly, the picture comes on the paper. This is the present stage. Thirdly, the picture itself

inspires the painter. As it progresses he sees that in this place there ought to be a different colour; this is not right; that is not right; and so on. And as he looks at the picture, he sees its faults, and so he alters it here and there. So it is with each life. One stage of our life is predestined, the other part is that which we perform, and a third part of our life is that which is the effect of our actions. "As we sow, so we reap." All that we do, we see it in its reaction. and the reaction changes our life. The painter sees he must finish the picture differently—"so-and-so is not complete." So our actions tell us whether we ought to act differently.

Man always wants to know things he does not know. This dates from infancy. Children break things to see what is within. But he does not know *how* to know. He expects too much. Heavens and earth are both revealed to him.

If we want to see what is on the seventh floor, we must leave the bottom floor. If we are on the first floor, and cannot get on the higher floors, it means, as mysticism shows, that we certainly do not wish to go but are a captive on the first floor. *That* is the captivity.

Rumi said "the bamboo-flute,—what is it that the flute says that makes you like it so much? Why does it moan? Why does it win your attention so much? What is it that appeals to you?—It moans for the separation that it suffers; because it has departed from its home, and has lost its original plant, the bamboo. It was cut off from its proper place. It moans for the day that it was one with the whole bamboo-tree, it moans for the joy and the peace which it has enjoyed, but never receives again. It is the parting for which it moans, and by which it appeals to you."

So has it been with man. Man wishes to know about God, about heaven, about the things unknown, and about the world unseen, and he thinks he cannot

see it from the first floor. He is not ready to believe there is anything on the seventh floor; he thinks there is no such thing as a seventh floor, nothing but the first floor.

If he were released from this delusion, and if he were allowed to go to the other floors, then he would be able to see what the fourth, fifth, ... seventh floors contain. And then he would know there is something from which one can obtain a knowledge of past, present, and future.

Suppose on the third floor there was a mechanism which produced instruments, one would know that on the first floor there must be a gathering of materials, and on the second floor an arranging into groups; on the third floor they come into tangible appliances, and one can make out what it is that is likely to be on the fourth floor.

Thus it says in Quran: "we sent our servant (prophet) in the midst of the night to the sphere of the heaven, where we showed him signs such as we desired to show him. . . ." In other words, we *want* the one who wishes to realise us, we want him to know life; it is our desire that he may see the signs that we previously make and arrange, and the things which can be seen by rising to the third and fourth floor.

The floors represent planes of existence. We do not only exist on the earthly or physical plane. Being absorbed in this plane makes us awake to this, but blind to the others. Language fails to explain the things of heaven. Those who have the experience of such things are bound to be silent, because there is no language for them.

As a matter of fact, all the floors are really *here*! Only when we are not open to see these floors; we are only on the first. Then, too, this mortal part must die; but we can die in this respect *now*, and pass on *now* to a perception that is beyond. The several floors are nothing but clothes. In this life, the light

is hid under a bushel; the bushel is the physical body. It cannot be disclosed until the mortal part is removed.

If we depend on our eyes for sight, and our ears for hearing, and our mouth for speech, we are still "dead!" But we experience in life sometimes that which we see without eyes, and hear without ears, and speak without speech. If we have seen without eyes, does it not show that we can see without eyes? Can you not see in a dream, without eyes? Therefore the faculty of seeing and hearing is in *us*, but is always depending on the physical body, physical eyes, and so forth; we become helpless and subject to death.

The teaching of immortality is to *wake* him up to see he *must* leave physical and material conditions if he is to live at all One must aim at being independent of physical sight and hearing and so forth.

We know that if we really want to understand a thing, we close our eyes because we can see it better. If we are thinking in this manner, it means that we are listening to some thought coming from some other plane. At such a time we want to cut off and stop outward sound or sight. All the meditations and concentrations of the mystics, and their dreams, are their journeys to the inner planes. It is necessary if the soul has the desire to know the past, the present, and the future. The soul must satisfy its desire by a contemplative life. The more tired and exhausted the mind, the more is meditation needed.

Sages spoke with rocks, birds, and animals (S. Francis), not as *we* talk, but by means of an insight into things; and every object expressed itself to them, speaking to them about its past, its present, and its future.

What a wonder that the animals and birds also know what is future! Horses, dogs, cats know when someone is going to die. They begin to cry. And yet man does not know it! Why should he not know

it? But his soul is so absorbed on the earth plane and in earthly things than the birds and beasts and animals are freed from—*they* sit quiet, and meditate, and concentrate! Man never sits quiet, and therefore the animals and birds, through their silence, are capable of knowing what man does not know.

All man's activity brings death and decay much sooner. Intuition is stifled. "This worker will never suit; this servant must be changed;" that is, there is the tendency in the soul to look forward at what is going to be, or at what has been in the past. It is the light of our soul ("intelligence") that does this. Intelligence working through physical means is no greater than intellect, but intelligence working free and independently from physical means is *Wisdom.*

Wisdom is not cleverness, but infinitely superior. Wisdom works independently of the physical means, and therefore acquires intuition. The clever person is working by means of his physical body, but the wise person is working independently of it.

Palmistry, astrology, and such like,—are they the best means of knowing the future? All these means are right, none is wrong. There is always truth everywhere. The eye must look, and to whatever it looks, the seer will see. It is not necessary for the view to be in a certain symbol or tea-cup; it is as open as a book wherever the seer looks.

The master knows all things that go on in a factory, but the workers only know that which goes on just where they are working. The master sees all. One person sees a square, another a street, another a house, another something less still. But the one at the top of the tower will see all of these. The seer will see all in *his* consciousness, wherever he casts his glance he will see still more clearly.

"Each leaf of a tree becomes a book of revelation, and reveals to the one who sees; and he reads the whole nature as a book." Sa'di.

Spirits and Spiritism.

"SPIRIT" in its true sense is the essence. The spirit of anything means its *essence*. And when we consider the true essence there is only one. When we consider the true spirit there is only one spirit.

But of course in the world of variety, one life is many lives, one thing has many manifestations. This manifestation makes us see many forms, many names of a one and only Being; and when we begin to overlook that one part of that Being and begin to direct our attention to the variety of manifestation, we see that the spirit of each thing is its essence. The spirit of 'jasmin,' the spirit of 'rose,' and so on: each has its own individuality, its own essence.

"Spirit," as understood by everybody, is the remainder of man's existence. After man has gone into the grave, what remains of him is considered spirit. And it has a very beautiful name in Sanskrit: Bhut= power='the one who has been'; 'the being which has once been.'

The spirit world distinguishes itself as different and distinct from the spirit experiencing the world through the body. The 'spirit' of camphor is not the colour or form of the substance, but that odour of camphor has existed in its 'spirit.' The 'spirit' of cinnamon is the fragrance and the effect that it has. The effect is still left after its form and substance has gone.

Every object in this world, after its vanishing, leaves a mark of its essence just like the flower. When the essence is taken from the flower, its external form is ruined, but it has left something which is its own.

Body and spirit both, is man! Man is a double spirit. Man in his cloak, his physical body, is more complete than a spirit alone. When the flower is living and its spirit has not been taken away from it,

both flower and its spirit are joined. A person whose sense of discrimination and feeling is rather developed can find that a visitor coming into the house brings with him a certain influence—good feeling or bad feeling or irritable feeling, or a blissful feeling. There is something with him besides his knowledge, besides his beauty, and when he leaves the house his body leaves as well as that strength and beauty and material part; but there is something left in that room for a certain time. The whole atmosphere is charged after he has gone and we feel it, that there is something left. The more directly you watch life, the more wonderful it is. All the miracles and phenomena are before us. Our every-day life is a miracle. If we are absorbed only in things which are so material and not in things of a delicate character, we do not see because we do not make ourselves sensitive. It is then that we think that what we do not see or perceive does not exist.

Consider how infectious is yawning! From this we can never say there is nothing beyond what the eyes and flesh can see.

Influence goes out of a living person and affects others in the vicinity. If the influence is so strong during life shall it not exist after he is dead? Only the influence remaining is left, yet how much greater its influence must be.

The light of the moon is the light of the sun.

There are two actions of sense, and two actions of the whole being:—(1) expressiveness. (2) responsiveness. The whole universe works on these two principles.

As soon as the expressing spirit expresses itself, the subject spirit may receive its impression, just like a person whose photo is taken in the camera yields his impression when the camera is properly adjusted. If the camera is not rightly placed, there will be no image on the plate. If a spirit had a fondness for someone or something, and desires to be in the thought of this beloved one all the time, always surrounding

this person, so, just like the camera taking the photograph of the person, this unconscious spirit of man takes naturally the impression falling from that spirit.

People think a person has gone mad when they find he wants to be alone. Child-prodigy may be the result of influence, and the person works under the influence, speaks, makes poems, quarrels, or does something. If people die with the thought of revenge that they could not accomplish, or have not had the courage to accomplish, they may find someone else, such as youth or child—who executes the act for the spirit without knowing why. Murders may even arise in this way.

Is this influence also present in the western world? The brain may be deficient in thinking power; the body may work on thought, and sometimes the thought may work on the body. Could not the mind produce decay in the brain, or is it true that it is always strain of the body that brings strain on the mind: or that anger brings a strain on the body? The trouble usually comes from within.

Hallucinations sometimes arise from thought and from mind (either in the same person or in some other person). We call it "obsession" when it comes from without.

Sometimes the living person can express and the spirit respond.

We cover our spirit under our body. We cover our light under a bushel. We never allow the spirit to become conscious of itself.

We are not doing spirits any good by calling them when they have no body; we have a body. Why not let them forget the experiences of this world of illusion rather than attract them? What good will it do them? One should only trouble others when one needs them very much. We should use ourselves as the vehicle of all experiences. We can communicate much better with another person who is clothed like us than we can with a spirit.

Is not God enough for our souls and sufficient to inspire us and to illuminate our wills? Is He not sufficient to guide our souls? Is He any less than a Friend here or in the spirit life? He is the great Well-wisher. In Him mercy is complete. He is Soul of all souls. When we devote ourselves to the thought of Him, all illumination and revelation is ours! God-communication is the best communication that true spiritualism can teach us! (Is. viii. 19.)

If we give all our wealth to the universe as a whole, we bring it about that any one person does not receive much. But it is a great accomplishment to actually realise God; it means that a very high degree of spiritualism has been attained. It is most difficult to attain such a conviction of God that there is not the slightest doubt, but when this is so the mere thinking of the friend is enough to secure his blessing; it becomes a privilege to be the friend of such a person. It is a privilege because he is the friend of God.

A person possesses the knowledge to which he has attained; he possesses the wealth which he has acquired. And so when the soul is illuminated it will have the desire to find some other soul illuminated in like manner, and will find a great joy and bliss in his society. He will surely find others who are on the verge of illumination. Even a drunkard will fight others to drink with; and so it is mystically. A very little light can be turned into a flame; and that flame into a very big flame A little drop of water desires to get the whole wood submerged, and in the end the whole wood will become sodden.

Why is it better to become a mystic than to remain a drunkard? As a matter of fact, a drunkard will never be satisfied. The mystic will look for what Omar Khayyam calls Wine, the wine of the Christ, after drinking which no-one will ever thirst (John iv., 14). He will always seek the wine *the intoxication of which* never dies off! It is the only wine —the intoxication of the Love-Divine.

The Master Mind.

IN the first place, there is a question, "What is mind?" Is it the "intelligence of the brain?" or is it "the activity of the brain?" or is it something else? When a person limits the word "mind" to "brain," he certainly draws "cause" down to the position of "effect."

There are two ways of looking at things: one, from the cause to the effect; the other, from the effect to the cause. The first is as looking from the top of the mountain to the bottom, the other is as looking from the bottom of the mountain to the top. The one who looks from the bottom fails many times to see what is going on on the top. Therefore the mystic follows the other way. He perceives that a person who investigates a higher truth by standing at the bottom of the mountain may sometimes succeed in seeing what is at the top, and sometimes he will not; and even when he does see, he does not see fully. It is different when a person looks from the top of the mountain to the bottom, and that is why the mystic goes to the cause and sees from the cause to the effect.

But the great thing is to get to the cause. It is easy to agree with the teaching of Jesus Christ, where He says "seek ye the kingdom of God first, and all things will be added." This teaching may be applied even in the investigation of the knowledge of human life, because as soon as one reaches the root of the cause, one has the Light, and the Light guides one. But the thing that is difficult is to get in when one is at the outside.

Humanity has striven after truth for ages, and yet there is no period in the history of the world in which mankind has not realised truth. The only

difference is that one says "I have discovered something," and the other says "there is nothing new under the sun."

The mystic view is that "what I have known to-day has been known before, and will be known after." It has never been known by all, and will never be known by all; but as the sight becomes keen, so man will be able to see.

In the first place, what the "Master-mind" is is really explained by the power of spirit on matter. When man sees that mountains are forced through by the effort of man, and that man has crossed the seas, that he flies in the air,—that itself shows that man is the master of creation.

But what is "man?" Is it a physical being, or is there something else called "man?" If the physical being is "man," then what of the elephant, who is twenty times bigger? The elephant would never have listened for one moment to what man says, and yet when he says sit "down," the elephant sits down; "stand" and he stands; "walk," and he walks. At the same time, the elephant is conscious of his heavy body and the strength that he has. Then not only the elephant, but the tiger and the lion, the kings of the forest as they call them in the East, we can see them mastered in the circus by one man although these most brutal animals keep killing other animals and live by the terror they evoke, so conscious are they of their strength. Man has mastered them.

Evidently there is something hidden in man. What is it? In the Sanscrit language, the word Mana means "mind"; the words manu, manushu, mana, man, mind all belong to the same root. The word "man" means "mind."

The physical being developed as long as the animal developed, but when the time came for mind to develop there came into being, man, mind!

At the same time there is the question as to whether every man can really claim to be human! or as to what a

human mind should be. This is shown by the story that one day Diogenes went seeking in the market place, with a lighted lantern at midday, and when they asked him what he sought, he answered, "A man."

Ghalib, a Hindustani poet of Delhi, has said in his verse: "There seems to be a difficulty in all things; it seems difficult even for a man to claim to be a man."

The question is "what is the difference between man and animal?" Is it not in the form of the man? But if the form only is man, we have the fact that strictly speaking all forms in this world gradually change into the human. The more we study the life of birds, insects, creatures, or even the vegetable kindgom, we shall see very plainly how the face of man has appeared step by step from the primitive preparatory stages through all the different manifestations until it has appeared as man. So if it were the form that makes man man, he would never have been named "mind." So it is something beyond form that makes man. The whole matter is as Rumi of Persia explains in his Mesnavi, "that our life on earth is as a captivity, an imprisonment." An imprisonment in what? In a physical body which covers the light of the soul; and the mind is also helplessly attached to the body. It is the bodily desires (passion, anger, appetite, all the different desires and needs) that make the mind helpless and make man hold to them. All the worries and anxieties and depressions and despairs arise from them. There is not a single moment in which the mind is able to stand aloof so as to reflect the light within, the light of the soul, so limited has it been made by the limited existence on earth.

Really speaking, this is the whole tragedy of human life.

The one thing that hinders man from advancing spiritually, or at least from advancing towards the goal that he has come for and is longing to attain to, is the only thing and it is everything: that the mind

is so absorbed in the demands and wants of the physical body that it has hardly a moment to give itself solely to the reflection of the light of the soul.

A person may say "I do not believe even in such a thing as 'soul,' since there is no evidence of such a thing; I do not believe in a hereafter; I do not believe in a spiritual or a higher thing, only in what I see or enjoy in this worldly life." What then?

The answer is: "You believe at least in being happy; you believe in happiness being something worth attaining in life; you also believe in living; you do not wish to die. Not only do you believe these two things, but you believe in being left alone when you are tired, being left in peace, in having "rest." You believe in understanding things you cannot yet understand." So he believes in four things! He may not believe in inspiration, revelation, or some higher spirit coming and telling him, but yet he believes in trying to understand things that puzzle him, in seeking to have removed that cloud of confusion which hinders the light from coming that will guide him to the understanding of the things which at present confuse. So there is a longing in him to find out something he does not know about.

In every person, therefore, whether spiritual or material, whatever view he has, there are these four inclinations, four desires: to live (to save his life even to the extent of risking his life in order to defend himself against being killed), to be happy (theatre, music, dancing, singing, a play, sport, something that pleases), a desire to know, and a desire to have peace (resting, being left alone). Whether he believes in God, in spirit, in heaven, in scripture, in a hereafter or not, he certainly believes in those four things. They develop gradually. As one studies more and more the nature of acquiring these things, that study itself becomes a form of religion, and attainment of the root of the four things is the spiritual perfection. It is only that one goes on a religious path, another in the path

of wisdom, another in the path of devotion and another in the path of the form or ceremonial of worship. Whichever way it be, the constant pursuit after these four things brings the attainment of the same goal in the end, the goal for every soul.

Some paths lead sooner than others, that is all.

If we think more about the desire for happiness for instance, we see that although every soul seeks after pleasure or wealth or position or power to become happy, he finds that everything in life is changeable. That which he obtains, in the satisfaction of the desire for pleasure or success or achievement (which are all forms of desire for happiness) can only be held like air. How long can you hold that? Is it not always slipping from the hands, be it wealth or position? The most difficult thing in life is to hold it when you have it. It is true it is difficult to acquire, but how much more difficult to keep it. Thousands of people are after it. "How can we get it from him" they say. Relatives, friends, enemies, burglars, thieves, robbers, everybody contemplating upon his wealth, holding it tight as he is, worried more and more every day about it. So, on the one side there is the happiness of holding something which is not his own, and on the other the strain of keeping safe that which does not really belong to him, and is changeable and momentary. This takes away his happiness.

All the things that give happiness, however much pleasure and comfort they may give, seem so great a prize beforehand; but when it comes to paying the cost of having them one begins to understand that there is no comfort or pleasure that is really worth while. As Omar Khayyam says, "when I am seeking for happiness, all pleasures and comforts seem to be blessing for that moment; but in the end everything is dust."

There is a beautiful story illustrating this idea. In the palace of a Mogul king there was a housemaid, and when making the bed she was once overpowered by the sense of the beauty of the room of the king, the

fragrance all round, the windows open allowing the cool breeze to come in—so grateful when the summers are so hot as in the East. She felt she would like to sit in the bed a moment, and "see how it feels." How very soft and nice and very fragrant, she thought. And she sat there; and then felt she would like to lean in the cushions. But unfortunately she fell asleep. Then the king and queen happened to come in. He says, "what an impertinence." The queen was very displeased too.

In a moment a whip fell on her back, and she got up with a great horror, and looked hither and thither, and then smiled. And the king and queen were amused to see her smile on receiving the whip.

Said the queen, "why do you smile?" She said, "Oh, it was a thought."

The king says "tell me the thought."

"The thought was, that it is so fragrant in this room, and the cool breeze so balmy, and this bed so soft and comfortable—I thought I should like to see how it feels, and I slept; and I perhaps do not sleep for more than a few minutes or perhaps half an hour; and you come; and I received a whip. Now by sleeping there half-an-hour I receive a whip, so I do not know what you will receive. You have been sleeping here for years together!"

This is a lesson. There is no pleasure to be gained without a cost; it may be a cost of wealth or of time; it may be even at the cost of life. Man, so absorbed as he is in the pleasures and comforts of life thinks very little of this and goes on until the time comes when it is too late to think of it. Life has been nothing but a captivity to this constant longing for happiness and pleasure, which when it comes he finds himself unable to enjoy.

So this teaches that the source of real happiness lies somewhere else. It is not in a building of sand that comfort can be got. It is in oneself that lies the building in which one can get comfort. Having dis-

covered the nature of pleasures one may think "after all, these pleasures were just like lips touching the wine and not drinking it. The wine is somewhere else." But in the end even the pleasure-seeker comes to the same goal, that of the truth.

The third thing is the constant desire to live. Every bird and animal and beast, even the smallest insect in the world—as soon as you wish to touch it, it wishes to save its life; it runs away, it wants to live, even if it lives in the dirt its desire is to live. How dear life is to every creature! how much everybody wishes to live! and yet at the same time there is this force of destruction in the form of diseases and in the form of death, which sweep away so many! and still the desire in every heart is to live. This thought teaches that it is not the believing in God, in spirit, in religion, that is the secret, it is the desire in every heart for life. This also he can find by searching within himself. The life is hidden within him, and when he begins to find it then he feels he is safe.

Then, if we think about the desire for understanding, we notice how everyone wishes to learn, to read, to study, to learn about things in any possible way. But the desire cannot be satisfied until the light within is brought, so that he may understand by this.

We come then to the truth that all things can be accomplished by the mastery of mind. And so the question comes "how can mind be mastered?" The answer is that mind cannot be mastered until the mind is master of the body. The difference between a master-mind and a person without mastery is the difference between a person sitting on a horse with a saddle, and holding the reins in his hand, and a person sitting on a horse whilst the latter is jumping and running wherever it likes, and there is a fear that at any moment this horse will put him down; he is not able to control it.

A person may realise all the different weaknesses in himself and be very sorry about them and would like to give them up if he could, but he finds the difficulty

that whether he likes some little weakness or not he cannot hold himself back from doing things (whether it be weakness of mind or weakness of action). This shows that though the desire of the soul is always to direct man on the right path, on the path of virtue, on the good path, yet at the same time he has lost his control, and he is led away by some force he cannot control. The weakness of character is shown when a person says "I do not wish to be angry; after being angry I am very sorry, but at the same time I cannot help it; I do not wish to hurt others, but at the same time when the moment comes, I cannot help it, I am abrupt." Then, even in vices such as drink or thieving, or any weakness, it is all because of weakness of mind. When the mind has no control over its thoughts and feelings, when it is not mastered, all these things come to pass.

From all this it is plain that man has two aspects of being—(1) the servant aspect (2) the master aspect. When the servant aspect is fed alone and the master aspect is not, then the master aspect of his being longs to be master, and cannot be; and the whole conflict in life depends on that. When a person looks at the master aspect and wishes to be master then he becomes master of *himself*; and he becomes not only master of his thoughts, feelings, and actions, but he becomes master of his affairs.

What a person calls "Fate," the key of all this comes into his hand; he becomes the king of the kingdom that has been given to him from God; and when one has arrived to that stage, then comes a still greater and exalted stage which may be understood in this way:—

In a small way we say "that person is guided by that person or listens to him or gives in to him." Why does he give in? The answer is this, that the person who does not give in is the person with the master aspect alive in him. The person who gives in has the servant aspect alive in him. To understand this

secret is to understand the secret of the spiritual hierarchy. It is the secret of the coming of the prophets and of the Master Mind, of what is called "Superman." The symbolic picture of this is shown in Hindu symbology, where the Devatas have four hands—two hands for the body and two for the mind. The four make a perfect man. When there are only two external hands, material hands, and the other hands are not yet attached to the mind the mind is not active, cannot control. There are these four different forces—the two physical arms and the two arms of mind which sets life on its feet—the four arms that make the perfect man, the Master-mind.

Having these, he becomes responsible for his affairs as well as the affairs of others, and the people who have been in the world as leaders of nations, leaders of humanity, and have led humanity to the spiritual, the right, the religious path, have not done so just through their intellect. No, there was some power behind.

There are many intellectual people running round from morning till evening; every moment of theirs is spent in their cleverness and polish of mind. But this is only an activity; it is not the power of mind. The power of mind is such that without speaking words the mind speaks. Without suggestion in words, the mind reflects what is in this mind or that. Things that the literal arms cannot accomplish the arms of mind can. Means are procured for the accomplishment of every object. In the fairy tales of old, it is said about the jinn that "one day a village teacher was teaching boys and among them was a jinn, and he was in the form of a boy. But the village teacher did not know that he was a jinn. One day, there was something at a distance, and he asked the boy to bring it. This boy, instead of getting up, just stretched his hand and got it! And the teacher was so frightened that next day he would not allow him to come into the school."

This story tells us of the Master Mind. It is not

necessary, that is, to be of a certain age to have the mastery. Sometimes a child may have greater mastery than a grown-up, and greater will. Therefore it is not dependent on age. "Where there is a will, there is a way."

For a man to say "take care of me, I cannot hold the secret, I must speak it out," "I cannot hold myself back, I must give it," "I cannot manage this," "I cannot remember this"—all these weaknesses denote the lack of mastery of mind.

The master-mind shows mastery in everything:—in his sayings, in listening, in understanding, in doing all things. Is this to be attained by contemplation? by concentration? by meditation? No, really speaking, it is in your everyday life, in your simple everyday actions that you develop the power of mind by this simple law:—when you are doing some work and the desire comes, "no, I must go and rest and sleep," and you go and rest; you give in to your desire, go and rest,—but the work is not accomplished! Then a person says "I must not be abrupt, inconsiderate; I must have consideration from now on." Next day something happens in which he should be considerate and gentle, but he thinks "in this case it does not matter, it is a small thing; it is a very small thing." He thinks "to-day it does not matter"—and gives in! The excuse comes to the rescue: "with *this* person it does not matter; to-day it does not matter; at this moment it does not matter." As soon as he gives in to a slight weakness, next time he falls down because the weakness wins every time.

So for every person seeking to attain mastery he will find some weakness waiting for him; if it is not one weakness there will come another.

He is neglectful who does not think of this law. He may think it does not matter, it is only a little finger. But if the finger fails, next time his hand will fail, and in time his mouth will be in the mouth of weakness until he is swallowed up by it. Then

is has become too late. And when his power has gone, there is no strength.

So what is the religion of a sage? Every religion is his religion and yet no religion is his religion. His religion is that of wisdom. He masters the mind not only by all these things, but at the same time, by the way of contemplation, by learning how to concentrate, by learning how to live the life, he practises the mastery of mind; for if he does not master his mind, concentration will not help him. If the small things are not managed how can he manage the contemplation? How many people will say "when we sit for a concentration, our minds go into a thousand things, we seem to be sitting in a chair but our mind seems to be jumping all over." Where is the concentration?

Therefore it is helpful to concentrate, and it is helpful to be guided by someone who goes the path of concentration; but at the same time, if a person will not practice in his everyday life and in every thing the LAW OF MASTERY, he will not be able to accomplish this great work.

The Desire of Nations.

ON reference to the works of a great teacher of the Sufis, who said "In order to know God, know yourself," it follows that in order to know the desire of nations, or of people, we should first know our own desire. Until we know ourselves, we cannot know about others. As long as we are ignorant of our own life's needs and wants, and of the secret of our own nature, we can never understand the needs and wants and the secret of another person's nature.

Rightly speaking, we ourselves are a nation within ourselves. More than that, we are not merely a nation within ourselves, we are a whole universe within ourselves. Therefore, if we study self, we shall find we can study not only nature but this whole world and even all other worlds. To study ourselves also means the study of the primitive condition of man, and the study of the primitive condition of man is to study life in all its forms. We must learn about the inclination of this as well.

What is the inclination of life in all forms? There is a verse in the Bible which explains this, indirectly giving a hint of the secret. "We live and move and have our being in God" (Acts 17. 28). We live to move, and we move to make our being in God. Without moving we are not living. Without making our being, we do not move, nor do we live. Therefore it is the condition of life that if we live we should move, and progress and attain that state of being for which we are purposed.

See that inclination in every being! A little plant, a tree—if we suppress its growth, if we build a fence round it, if we cover it with glass—it will not flourish, it will not bring out flowers; in time it will

die out. Why is this? It is because its life cannot express itself when it is covered, cannot express itself when there is a fence round it. It is not enough that it be alive, because life does not want only to live; to realise itself, life must be able to make progress and progress is only made by obtaining free movement.

We find the same inclination even in little worms and germs. A little ant has the same desire. You wish to touch it, but it does not want you to touch it. You wish to keep it in a certain place, but it does not want to stay there.

However much we say we will take great care of the parrots and the sparrows and the beautiful birds, saying we love them so much—it is no pleasure to them! Of course they will eat in their captivity, if they are hungry; they will drink water in their captivity when they are thirsty; but this is no sign that they enjoy themselves or that they are happy.

Why should they not be happy? It is because it is not their life's inclination to be restricted. Life did not give a bird wings in order to stay in a cage! Wings were given as the means whereby to enjoy life, to make a nest where they can live, to make the acquaintance of other birds, to enjoy the life of the jungle, and to collect water and food for the comfort and ease of their family. It is in that way that they make their being.

So it is the same case with the animals and birds as it is with the plants. For them also, life means 'to make a being,' 'to move.' Life demands to be allowed to move and make its being.

When we come to human life, do we not find it the same? However much we love our little infant or child, and suggest "You sit here, I like you here so much," he will stay there for a moment, and then he will say "No, let me play." You say to him "Your life is to sit here." He answers "No, I do not like to sit here." Then you give the child a beautiful toy,

and say "sit here." Yes, for the sake of the toy he will sit for a moment; but in another moment he will take the toy with him and go away! "Let me have my freedom," he says. Does not this show that the purpose of life is freedom?

As long as man is ignorant of that he is ignorant of the secret of his own nature, and of the secret of any other. Neither he nor another can be happy however much wealth, or property, grandeur of position, or palaces he may be the possessor of.

Interdependence is a law of Nature. We make our life by sharing the joys and pleasures and sorrows of another, but it takes us a very long time to understand this one thing. Our observation and study of man's nature shows that his life demands freedom, and yet on the other hand we find that nature develops selfishness in man, more than in any other creatures. The demands of his life are so much greater, and he becomes so absorbed in satisfying these demands, and possessing and enjoying them when he has them that he really forgets the secret of nature, really forgets the secret of his own happiness as well as that of others.

Not only does individual man seek freedom, but also the nations and races and peoples throughout the whole world, have been absorbed in the pursuit of freedom. Whenever wars have taken place, whenever there is bloodshed in the world, whenever there have been revolutions and various troubles in life—all the different disasters that have occurred are due to this same reason: on the one side man's selfishness, and on the other his neglect to understand the LAW OF NATURE AND THE LAW OF HAPPINESS.

Ignorance of this law exists in the human soul from childhood. Whatever a child sees that is attractive and beautiful, at once it wants to have it, never thinking whose it is at the moment. "No-one shall touch it; that shall belong to me," he says. 'I shall be happy only when I have what that other

child has." Even if he already has a beautiful toy, he still wants to have what the other one has. It is this human nature which goes on developing regardless of the secret of happiness which can only be disclosed when the veil of ignorance has fallen off from before his eyes.

He never understands what Justice is, even though he may speak of it. Real justice cannot be perceived until the veil of selfishness has been removed from the eyes. The least spark of selfishness will prevent man from being just; he will continue to have a partial interest, because he will be looking to his own interest; he will call that "his right," "his justice" which he makes the means of accomplishing his own interest.

The prophets and holy ones have all recognised the justice of God as the only real justice. What is the nature of the justice of God? It cannot be read in a scripture; it cannot be learned from a book; it can only be learned from the self within after selfishness has been removed. Our limited self is as a wall separating us from the self of God. God is as far away from us as that wall is thick. The Wisdom and Justice of God are within us, and yet they are far away under the covering of the veil of the limited self. Whoever has arrived at that realisation of the nature of God's justice, is able to see all things in a different way from anyone else. His whole outlook on life becomes different.

From the most ancient times teachers have come as messengers, one after the other, in order to instruct man in this law of God's justice, the law of co-operation, the law of love amongst men. That which Christ taught, they taught, for that has always been their work. But it is the way in which education and new reforms have worked out modern civilisation that has covered the real spirit of religion; the nations gradually unlearned what true religion was, and became more and more depraved. Christ came

to re-awaken the ancient Truth. And then Mahomet formed not only a nation with his spiritual message but also formed a school in which love and co-operation and equality and democracy should be learned—that the dependence of men on one another is that on which the happiness of humanity depends. Hence it is written, "Every Moslem is a brother of another Moslem"; "if there were a king and a prime minister offering prayer, a poor man can stand beside them and make his prayers with them."

How was the original spirit changed? For, at first, Islam taught the Word directly and indirectly,—directly to the followers of Islam, indirectly to humanity at large. Before the spirit changed, the religion was sent by the prophet, but afterwards the religion was used as the instrument for forming a nation. Instead of a nation being the protector of religion, the religion became the protector of a nation! The desire to attain a God-ideal was degraded into a desire to attain a national ideal in order to satisfy a selfish motive. No sooner did that spirit enter Islam than the whole building tumbled down.

In the history of the world, this lesson has been taught not once but a thousand times. As long as a nation works for the interest of God and humanity it will be always prosperous, but as soon as it uses religion in order to exalt the national ideal then all falls down like a house of cards. We can see this in the history of Hinduism, in the history of Islam, in the history of the European religious sects. If there is the wish to rise, the ideal must be high; if there is the desire to fall let the ideal be low. It is the love of the earth that will attract man to the earth. But it is the love of heaven that will attract him thither. It is as the Bible says, "Where your treasure, there will your heart be also." When the whole of man's ideal in life is his degree of education, his success in trade (all towards exalting the self, the individuality), then he is descending and

not ascending. He is selfish as an individual, he becomes selfish as a nation, then as a race, and at last there is warfare; the racial ideal expresses its selfishness in great wars. Even people of the same nation will fight one another.

The same thing develops further when it appears between classes and parties, between labour and capital, the higher against the lower. All of them have a wrong ideal, selfishness is allowed to rule instead of the higher ideal.

And even that is not the end. The next thing which develops is disharmony of sex. Families becomes inharmonious because of the selfish ideal; the husband wants his own way; the wife wants her own way. The husband thinks "As long as I am happy that is all that is necessary." In whatever direction you may journey in life you will meet this tendency. Selfishness may begin with the thought that "As long as my country is benefited, that is my benefit"; and then it will narrow to "if my family is benefited, if we become wealthy and have that desirable thing, that is sufficient for the day;" and then it narrows down from "for my father, or mother, or wife, or children" until it ends in "nothing matters as long as I am happy myself." Man has now become cold, ignorant, and blind to the law that life depends on the happiness of those with whom we live. The whole life is one! In all these different names and manifestations the life is all one. The true thought is 'If my wife is not happy, my children, my neighbours, my servants are not happy, how can I ever be happy?' An insult given to one will one day return.

How simple it is. Yet how difficult for man to understand. It is simple to him who observes life keenly; it is difficult to him who is absorbed in himself. Life is nothing but this! Life is not a particular philosophy, not a particular faith, not a particular religion, not a particular code of morals.

Life is that dependence upon our surroundings, upon the life of our neighbours, upon the life of the nation, upon the life of the whole world! That is what keen observation and a wide outlook on life teaches man.

How the peace of the world has suffered during the past few years! Do you not think that the effect of this suffering has not been felt by all the other nations, even though they were not actually engaged in the war? The effect has spread both directly and indirectly throughout the whole world. The whole of humanity has gone through the pain. Even the fishes of the sea have suffered with man in the catastrophe. The invisible things have suffered. It is all one life! How could it be otherwise?

If the wound in the foot has an effect on the arm, even though the arm is not wounded, if the pain has its effect upon the whole body (1 Co. 12: 26), how can it be otherwise between nation and nation?

We can see the operation of this Law even in our own circle. When there is someone among our own acquaintance who is poor, someone among our servants, someone among our relatives depending on us, helpless or in distress, suppose we cause him trouble, or do some injury, even though we may not know it at the time, some day afterwards we shall discover it; it will return to us. It may return through some other channel. We may be too blind to see that it has originally come from that source. We may not see if we are in Africa that the harm has come from someone in China. But life is nevertheless all one.

Similarly when we bring joy, and pleasure, and happiness, it is never lost any more than is anything that is done harmfully or injuriously, or of a troublesome nature. Good deeds, kindnesses, forgivenesses, tolerance, acts of love—none of these are ever lost, and some day they will return to us. Even if the recipient appear faithless or heedless, it is all the same. There is no need to be disappointed even if he proves to be unworthy of our kindness or our love. When we

realise that all life is one life we realise that it is to *that life* that we give our love and kindness and mercy. Then it is bound to return to us! If not to-day, it may be next week; if not next week, it may be next year; if not here, then somewhere where we never expected it could even possibly come!

"You shall find it after many days" (Eccles. xi, i).

Though there may still be time to awaken to a true understanding of these things, it is often too late by the time that the sufferings and troubles and misery has come to the individual or to the multitude. If the person has so far failed to understand them before they actually came, perhaps he will never understand. When there is some little pain or bad feeling in himself, he may think he has had some illness, but if he does not think about it, if he takes no notice of it, something worse may come. And so it has been with the world. The worst evil that has ever been should show man that it is time now to awaken and understand that it is not a study of national or social questions not a study of religious questions that will bring an everlasting peace, but it is the insight into life which is the real religion and which alone can help man to understand life!

What is that religion? It is nature's religion of freedom; the religion that will liberate man. When man sees that the ideal of every soul is freedom, and that he cannot enjoy his own freedom unless he has shared his freedom with others, then and only then can it be that troubles and unhappiness will cease.

A Hindustani poet says "It is for sympathy that we have created man, not that he should worship God." There are so many angels in heaven who constantly worship God. Therefore, man being the final manifestation he is supposed to do something different from the angelic world. God says "We have made man to sympathise with his fellow man, to be serviceable to others, to give joy and peace to others." Until he does that he is not really 'man.'

The animals are all selfish; they all seek their own life's demands and the satisfaction of their passions is their life. Their understanding of what happiness is, is that it is just this gratification. Birds make their nests. Animals have their holes. Therefore if the only ideal necessary for man were that he should attain comfort and wealth and position, he is no different from the lower creation. The great difference is that man has the power of sympathising. He it is who can say "My mother has taken care of me; now she is old; I must listen to her; I must tolerate her hard words; perhaps she has only misunderstood. I was very disagreeable once, and yet my mother was always patient and kind and attentive through it all." If one's father has become old; if our friends are in difficulty; in every case we must have sympathy. Not as the animals who bite their aged ones, and forget their mothers and fathers when their own needs are satisfied, but as he who thinks gratefully of his aged mother, of the wife to whom he is united to share in sorrows and joys in whatever way they are able to serve one another.

He is a man who thinks "Though in business we have to make money and profit, yet by proving ourselves sincere and true in heart, by proving ourselves honest, and in earnest, the business will increase still more and remain safe." He is man in national ideals in social ideals, in racial ideals, in the ideals of the whole humanity, who looks at nature with widely open eyes, and can perceive the whole life is one; that all individuals are one embodiment of life.

He who perceives this realises "What I have taken from another, I have lost! What I have given to another that I have gained! Whatever good I have done to another is my gain, and whatever good another has done to me is my loss. The kindness, the service, the love and sympathy that another has given is all lost when the person is gone. It could only be there so long as he was there. But deeds of goodness done to another, of kindness to another, of

consideration to another, all these deeds will last with him who does them both here and hereafter!

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"The desire of all nations shall come," said the prophet Haggai. There are two aspects of "desire." First, there is that which nations and individuals seek for, for themselves; second, there is that which it is desired they shall seek. When the desire sought after becomes that which it is intended for them to receive, the desire shall come. When the word "desire" is understood as a name for the Ideal Man, the same thought is expressed, in fewer words. When all disharmony is removed, and all sit at the feet of the One Beloved, the whole earth will appear as one great temple of God,—a wonderful home of peace. As has been said: "wearied and disheartened with their own failures, and finding their last and greatest efforts resulting in anarchy, men will gladly welcome and bow before the heavenly authority, and recognise its strong and just government. Thus man's extremity will become God's opportunity, and "the desire of all nations shall come"—the Kingdom of God, in power and great glory.—Hag. 2, 7."

Democracy.

THERE is nothing new under the sun, said Solomon the Wise. Man thinks democracy "is something that has been developed in the spirit of man, which he never knew before." He thinks the democratic way is not only right but new.

But when we consider deeply, we see that life is the same, the ideals are the same, nature's laws are the same in all ages. And therefore these two aspects—the spirit of dependence and independence—have always existed and have always manifested in their time. For instance, every soul knows that in its own experience the very first aspect to be experienced was the aspect of dependence. The infant is dependent on its mother and father, in whatever way they direct him, he acts and works. Then comes the age in which he is old enough to understand his own affairs and he says "yes, father, that which I think I will do, I will do." The father and mother say, "yes, our child has grown up and he understands his own way; we should not interfere with him very much."

We see, then, that in everybody's life there have been the two phases—the phase of dependence and the phase of independence.

It is exactly the same in the lives of peoples, of multitudes, and of nations. It is always the same. At first dependence, then independence; at first autocracy, then democracy. The life and evolution of the individual and of the multitude is alike.

As freedom is the nature of every soul, so the child, the little child, seeks freedom. You want the child to sit in your arms, but he says "Oh no, let me go and play." An animal, a dog, or a cat, which depends so much on the sympathy of mankind, at the same time does not wish to be deprived of freedom.

That shows that at every stage of development life is trying to become free. That is why it is true to say that the spirit of democracy is not a thing just of today; it has existed in all ages. Sometimes it has appeared in time, and sometimes it has arisen untimely.

When we trace the cause, the reason for this spirit, we find that it lies in idealism. The human race first developed a thought of idealism in itself—religions, learning, education have emerged from this one human tendency. And what is the idealism? It is the silent consideration, that recognition of affection and attachment which we even see in beasts and birds; sometimes deer recognise their mates, pigeons and doves have a kind of attachment for their mates. Sparrows and other birds have a tendency to share their responsibilities about their young ones with their mates. This all shows to us that the ideal has only culminated in man. Call it religion, wisdom, learning, what not, the only real human thing is the idealism. As soon as a man begins to think "these are my parents and I would like to serve them, so that they may not have the cares and tiredness and struggles of life" he shows idealism. Then the ideal extends to the neighbours: "when I was young I could not help them; now I can help them and I will care for the home of my neighbour, and protect him from robbery (for instance)"; here the idealism has extended to the neighbour. Then comes the consideration of life's partner—the queen of the home. As then man sees the beauty of life, he begins to develop his thought, and imagines forming beautiful forms, which form themselves into beautiful ideals. He expands the ideal and becomes capable of higher ideals. Motherhood is regarded by everybody with veneration, fatherhood is regarded by everybody with respect. Neighbour-hood is looked upon with friendly feelings. The elders or chiefs or kings in the village or town, who have given all their thoughts to the welfare of

that town or village—how are they regarded? "Here," they say, "is the father of the village (of the town) who has looked after us all when we were helpless or not learned enough." In this way the idea of a king or Rajah came, from the development of a certain kind of ideal. The civilisation of whatever age or time always started to develop from idealism. The whole source of civilisation is idealism and nothing else.

Why is the diamond worth millions of pounds, and a pebble nothing? Both are stones. Why pay more for one? It is just the ideal! Seven hundred dollars for "a chair of Napoleon's," and who knows whether he ever sat on it at all! This only shows how everything is based on an ideal. Without it, nobody can exist.

In the ancient times, the religion and the nation both went hand in hand; and there is no doubt that there is a great advantage in this, when we compare the other scheme with it,—for no nation without religion or spiritual ideal, but only based on material lines, can suffice the needs of a world that seeks constant peace.

However greatly a person is developed or learned, and is yet not in touch with the spiritual point of view, he remains selfish. His outlook on life is partial. His justice is self-made. How can he claim to be a just ruler?

The two things began together from the beginning. The history of Khusran, the old king of Persia, who was a prophet and king at the same time, shows this. He considered "my subjects are my children—more than my children, nearer and closer than my children; their interest is my interest; for them I live, for them I am born. My whole life is for them." The whole life of the country was based on that model, that king's ideal. He was the instructor, the preacher, the ruler. He ruled according to the spiritual law.

Solomon was prophet and king at the same time.

Rama, the Hindoo king, was a prophet and ruler at the same time.

Think of the impression they have left; to do this so many centuries ago, and yet, however many kings have come and gone since, the impression made by Rama still remains in the Hindu race. There are temples and shrines, and in them an image of the king whose whole life was spent for the welfare of the subjects. A figurehead or leader is always the ideal whom all follow at each age, and is it not so to-day? When the President shaves his beard, everyone does the same. Man keeps saying "I will get rid of this Idol," but he can never get rid of it; it is human nature. From infancy, man wishes to imitate somebody's walk or movement, or expression or way of talking.

"God is beautiful, and He loves beauty." He loves beauty through every soul, in the way of movetent, word, expression—in whatever way the beauty comes. He cannot help following beauty whether it be in democracy or aristocracy.

There is a story of a Persian king. A dervish was standing in the street. Now a dervish is a self-educated man, who knows and understands things; he is a free thinker. He does not abide by the law of society; he touches the depth of the truth and all the superficial and artificial rules and laws of society and religion do not matter to him; he leads his life free in thought and action; he is so happy in his philosophy that a thousand rags and tatters matter nothing to him.

This dervish was standing in a place where the king was about to pass. In the front of the procession were the pages, and they called out to him "get out of the way, the procession of the king is coming." He says "that is why." He went back a few steps, and when the pages had gone past he came forward again and sat down in the same place. Again came the cry, this time from the courtiers, riding on beautiful horses,—"away, away, the king is coming," they say. He says "that is why," and goes a few steps back and then,

when they have passed, he goes back to the same place! Then came the chariot of the king. When the king saw him standing in the middle of the street, he gently bowed his head to the dervish; and the latter smiles and says "that is why."

A young man who was watching this could not help laughing. He was curious about it too. "Why do you say to everybody, 'that is why'?" He answers, "it is plain. The gentleness of the king was why he acted so towards me, the dullness of the courtiers was why they were curt to me, the rudeness and crudeness of the pages and the bodyguard was why they were rude to me"—for in the East, they pay respect to holy men, even to a dervish.

Nobody in the world will deny this fact that the culture and the education and thought that has been cultivated for centuries among families, communities and people must manifest its effect.

A thinker has asked, "is one person's mind equal to another, or different? why should there be a system of voting?" The answer is, it is never equal; there is an immeasurable difference between minds. One mind may be developed more than two, another than ten, another than a hundred, another more than a thousand persons. One person whom you meet and talk to and sit with makes you feel as if you have been in heaven, so full of gentleness, knowledge, reponse and goodness is he. Another person. however free-minded you may be, you find that his manner, his point of view, everything is repulsive, and you cannot help it.

This shows that the root of civilisation is idealism, the seedling was in aristocracy, the plant of civilisation grows in aristocracy, and the climax comes in autocracy; for it is comfort and power that have always blinded men. You will always see people more thoughtful and considerate who are without money than those who have wealth; blinded with wealth they have no time to think of another person. Even help-

less people will have sympathy and share your pain, while those who have the power to help do not.

This aristocracy on one side, and on the other side the authority of a church with temporal power, both reach à climax when they are blinded by the power of wealth. The aristocracy which was the virtue and climax of civilisation turns into autocracy, and once that autocracy begins (king, president, elder or chief of a family) there arises a bureaucracy; what the king does the officer does, what he does the policeman, the constable, everybody does. As it says in Sanscrit: "as the king is, so becomes the subject." Everybody values the leader. An autocratic leader produces an effect on every person, making him an autocrat himself. If the king is fond of luxury, the man whose duty it is to wait on the king also becomes fond of ease and comfort. He is too lazy to get up in the morning, because the king is lazy also.

When this is so, it means that the time has come for another form of life to appear. That is why there come wars, revolutions, floods, strikes, rebellions. These are all signs that life is going to change. It is not only to-day; it has been so in all ages. Such signs always mean the change from autocracy to bureaucracy and then the new era begins, the ERA OF DEMOCRACY.

By the time that this new period has come, the spirit of independence has become ready to meet it. When this spirit is understood wrongly, it becomes a time of great trial to the world and humanity at large. When violence comes, rudeness and crudeness predominate in the social life, disregard of the true spirit of religion, consideration for others—these are the degradation of democracy.

Human nature is just like goats and sheep: where one goes twenty come behind. Fifty want to walk behind. So it is with man. One comes with a flock and seeks democracy, and the others follow without knowing what democracy is. It is not a craze. It is

not lunacy. It is not a spell. It is *the maturity of souls*—that is *the real democracy*! The soul now feels the responsibility, the value of its own power, the latent power and inspiration which it possesses. It is not necessarily a breaking off from church or religion, from law, or disturbance. These would be a degradation of civilisation.

Where can this spirit, this true spirit, be learned? Is it from socialism? Yes, but only a little. Is it from politics? Yes, but only partially. The view of the politician is a partial view. In the law-courts, the pleader is "the truth," but the other is also "the truth." Politics will give education, but the perfection of democracy can only be learned from the real science or religion, from the spiritual ideal.

See the spiritual democracy in Jesus Christ. According to their law, the Jews wished to accuse the people who sin, but He said "throw the stone—he who has never sinned." That was the outlook of democracy. In that, Christ has suggested human nature; that human nature was everywhere.

See the picture of the Master washing the feet of his disciples!

Then, in the life of the Prophet, we read of a negro-slave whom the Prophet's grandson called by his name. The Prophet says "that is not a good manner, call him 'uncle,' he is older than you." He teaches his followers that in the house of God there is no distinction between king and servant. The place of prayer must not be for the rich people alone. All can pray together, shoulder to shoulder; the Sultan and the Beggar can meet and pray thus. That was democracy.

Whence did it come? It came from the depth of religion; it came from spiritual law. However humble and low a person may be in occupation and evolution, we are none the less interdependent and require his help and service as he needs ours. However much wealth, or power, or rank, yet how much is our

dependence upon the humblest and poorest person in the world!

The realisation that the whole life must be give and take, is the realisation of the spiritual truth and fact of true democracy. Not till this spirit is formed in the individual himself can the whole world be elevated to the higher grade.

The Freedom of the Soul.

FREEDOM is such a thing that it is liked by every creature. From this we see that it is the soul's tendency, it is the spirit's longing to become free. Animals, birds, sparrows, cuckoos—that we give education to and tend, however carefully—still have the instinct to avoid being bound.

Where does the desire for freedom begin?

Its beginning is explained in a very beautiful way in some ancient stories. The stories from the Hebrew and Arabic Scriptures tell us that when God made Adam, He commanded the spirit to enter the body of Adam, which he had made out of clay and water. When the spirit was commanded to enter, it refused, saying "No, I will never become a captive in this dark prison, I who have always been free, dwelling anywhere and without bondage, without barrier. No, I will never become captive in this place."

Then God said to the angels that sing: "Sing." And when they sang, the spirit passed into an ecstasy, it became intoxicated by the beauty of the singing. And while in this state of intoxication it did not know whither it was going. Thus it was that it entered the required place.

So when Adam opened his eyes, the spirit was there! Adam was alive!

Rumi said, "The bamboo-flute, which appeals to you so much, moans to you about its separation from its home, the original bamboo." In Persia and in India, the reed flute is taken from the tree; so it says "I am taken away from my source, my home; made into a piece instead of the whole which I was at first." And this pain in his heart is the only thing that appeals to the heart of those who listen. It touches them and

moves them to listen long. There is a very beautiful truth in this.

When we enquire into the tragedy of life, the very first of all is this separation from freedom. This tragedy can be seen in all kinds of people. From rich to poor, from the most illiterate to the most educated, every one has this life's grudge. Maybe the one confesses, perhaps the other does not. But the grudge is in everybody's life all the same—that he has entered this objective world; for this entry seems to be the cause of all the tragedy of life, the tragedy that in it man's spirit cannot be satisfied, cannot have everlasting happiness, to stay in it.

But if you ask some person that you meet "What is the cause of your life's tragedy," he may say "oh, that I long to have some wealth; I am very poor; in the absence of wealth I am so unhappy."

Another person may say "oh, I have everything nice but my relatives are very unkind and inharmonious towards me."

Another says, "I have everything but good health."

A fourth says, "I have everything but I long to have a certain peace."

Another, "I long to accomplish this art; that big purpose in life; not having done so makes me unhappy."

And if you were to supply to each his life's need, giving money to the poor man, harmony to the man without harmony, position to the man who has it not, a beautiful palace to the one who longs for that, health to him who has it not—then see how long he would remain happy! It would be only for that moment that he receives his desire, and then he would still feel the hunger for he knows not what! He asks his mind "What more do I want," and his mind says "You feel so unhappy," And as soon as he asks "for what?" his mind answers that he cannot have that which he seeks!

It is in this way that man, all through his life, runs

after things which are, after all, not the real desire of his soul. Sometimes he thinks it is his bodily appetites and passions which demand satisfaction, sometimes that it is his intellectual powers,—but even were they satisfied he would still find himself unhappy. "Perhaps," he thinks, "it is wealth, position, honours that are lacking;" or he thinks, "it is not that I have not the things needful, but I have not enough of them!" If he has a motor-car, he is unhappy because he has not a chauffeur!

His mind, his reason, always puts forward some other cause for his unhappiness than the real one, in order that he may be kept in an illusion all his life; in order that all life long he should run after things which are not the real goal of his soul. Throughout his whole life he seeks after things, trying first this, then that; one day he buys this, another that. And after getting them, he still thinks "oh, it is something else yet,—that is why I am unhappy," and as long as he has it not, he considers that is the cause. If he has ten things, he wants twenty; he if acquires twenty he seeks thirty; if he has thirty, he desires fifty; and so on. Indeed if he had thousands and billions, he would want a kingdom; after that a whole universe; and if the whole universe were given him, the heart would not be satisfied because the demand of one's soul is still not understood. He goes on through life moaning and sorrowing for things he cannot gain,—not understanding in what lies true gain and true loss.

Therefore when a seer or one who has realised life looks at this world he sees however old a person may be—aged, young, middle-aged—he is still like a child. Children are so unhappy because they have not a toy, or cannot get a toy! a toy which the grown-up ones would not attach any importance to. To the seer, the desires of ordinary grown-up people are also toys! The things that matter to the world, to him they do not matter. This is the sign that he has realised the aim of his soul.

For the aim of his soul is freedom! Freedom is the soul's true nature; the soul has been free. By nature it is free. It is a captive in mind and in body. The whole tragedy of the soul is its captivity. Words such as Nirvana or Mukti or Salvation or Liberation—all these names are the words of the one aim or ideal of the soul through our whole life; yet a person does not know what it is he aims at. All that he does know is that there *is* such a longing, that there is this hope constantly there.

Everyone wakes in the morning as if he were looking for something to come. Everyone goes to bed with the thought that "perhaps to-morrow, or the day after to-morrow I will obtain my heart's desire." To some, the desire is a position, a friend; to others a hope. Everyone is looking out as if waiting for that something to come!

There is a familiar saying "Wait till my ship comes home." Every soul is waiting for his ship to come! not knowing what that ship will bring, or what sort of ship it is. Still, every soul is looking for "my ship"; every soul is unconsciously waiting for the coming of "my ship." One thinks it is the prospering of trade, another of business, another thinks it is the coming of power or position, but everyone believes the ship *will* come!

The ship is different according as it is pictured by the mind or the body or the soul; the ship of the soul is its freedom. Indeed freedom is the real object of all directions of life; if the desire is for wealth, that is nothing but a desire for freedom from poverty; if the desire is for power, that is nothing but a desire for "freedom to act as I wish;" the ideal of every soul is freedom—freedom to work, freedom to act, freedom to think, freedom in every direction.

Not knowing that this is the heart's real desire, mankind from the first day of his creation till to-day, still neglects the true freedom, because of his pursuit of freedom in the external life. That has been his

mistake. The scanty freedom he so obtained does not prevent him finding himself a captive still; he has still failed to gain that entire joy and peace which his soul longs for.

Freedom for the body would be the freedom of walking in gardens, of moving about in all things, to its own content. But that would not be freedom for the mind. The mind would still be captive. Suppose the mind has freedom—freedom of thoughts, of understanding, of imaginations, of actions—the soul would still be captive.

But if the soul be free, the mind is free, and the body is also free!

How do we attain to this freedom?

In the Sanscrit language there is a beautiful word for freedom "taran," which means liberation, 'swimming,' or 'floating.' And it is such a beautiful idea that both these things—swimming and liberation are alike in their nature.

How true it is, as the Eastern poets have always said, "life is a Bhavasagara, an ocean in which all things are drawn, fallen and absorbed." It sweeps away all the plants and trees and animals and birds and all that lie in the path of the flood—all are borne into the ocean. Such is the force and power of the ocean. Similarly, this life sweeps away all the trees and plants, animals and men. Everything that we see is here for the moment, and then away. There is always a certain period after which the things that seem so strong have all disappeared. Our ancestors, if they came back, would not recognise the country, the houses, the trees, the manners,—everything would be different. All that was familiar to them has been swept away. That is the story of this life. That is why it is called Maya, the illusion created before us like a dream in the night. In the morning, it has all gone! All the happiness, unhappiness, horrors, pleasures, whatever we experience in the night—in the morning we perceive it has been a dream!

The whole creation, when we come to think of it, is, in the end, no longer what we have thought it was—manners, customs, faces—everything is different.

That is the condition of life. It is just like the ocean or sea. The flood comes and it sweeps off all before it—flowers, fruit and all. Therefore life is pictured by the thinkers of the East as an ocean into which everything is swept.

The miracle of Christ is understood by mystics as teaching the mystery of Christ walking on the water. Walking on this water is taran, the same idea which the Sanscrit gives—to float or swim. To float or swim on the water one must have the head above water. The water which sweeps us away we avoid, in order to be able to keep that existence which our soul longs to keep. Our body is alive, our mind is alive, our soul is alive, and it does not want to be non-existent. It desires to continue to exist. However unhappy or feeble the person, his life is too dear to him to sacrifice. Suicide is only possible under great stress of emotion.

All works, all struggles—are to live! All fights, all disagreements, all money-seeking, all comfort-seeking—is to live! All through life it is one struggle to live. But the real life is not realised.

Christ, from first to last, teaches the importance of eternal life. His only lesson was "Life." It is the desire of the *soul* to live; and that life is the real life. Man keeps imagining his life is for getting delicious dishes or making merry, or for being comfortable for the time being. But when the body has gone, how will you live? what will become of your comforts? When the mind is not there, how will you satisfy the mind? To live in the body or the mind is to live in vehicles upon which the person becomes dependent—vehicles which must go and be no more!

Therefore the lesson that we learn is: how to swim, how to float, how to overcome the sinking in the flood of death or mortality. How shall we avoid that?

The answer is found when we understand that man is travelling in a boat; and the boat is heavily laden. The storm comes on and the one who is rowing says to the man "the storm is very heavy, your luggage is very abundant, the best thing will be for you to save your life by throwing off one of your bundles into the water. He says "Oh, that bundle is of things I have collected all my life, and I cannot throw it out." "Well, if you cannot throw it out you will drown!" And when he has thrown out one bundle, perhaps the storm becomes greater, and it is a case that the last bundle has to be thrown away as well. And he says "Oh, this one I can never part with; it contains things I have collected all through my life; they are souvenirs, and you want me to throw these away? things from my grandfather and my great-grandfather—do you want me to throw *them* away?" He says "If not, you will go also! If you want to save your life, throw them away!"

That is what death does with mankind. It says "You are interested so much in your vehicle, which you call "body." So first of all he sends disease. The person who thinks so much of his body is always ill. That is the first step. He is very conscientious about his body, saying, "This is the one thing I must keep well-preserved." And he goes on thinking of it too much. And so he feels ill, and in the end he has to throw both bundles away! body and mind.

There are others who will say, "Oh, I do not care for my body, but for my mind." They take care of their own imaginations, their own standards of thinking: "what *you* say is a lie, what I say is right." They are occupied with thoughts, with pursuits, with arguments, saying "Am I thinking right, are you, is she?" being all the time in doubt and constant worry of mind; all the time in a struggle about something which really is nothing. To the seer, it matters nothing. And then the flood (death) comes, and they are swept away; the mind goes, the body goes, and the

soul returns to its own source. This is a picture of mortality when mind departs from body with the impression of death

There is a story which explains this subject very well.

It is of a king who had a parrot which he loved and liked so much that he kept it in a golden cage, and always attended to it himself. The king and queen both paid such great attention to the parrot that every person in the palace was jealous of it.

One day, the king was about to go into the forest from where the parrot came, and said to him "my pet, I have loved you and kept you with all the care and attention and fondness that I could, and therefore I should like very much to take any message you would like to give me for your brothers in the forest." The parrot said "How kind of you to have offered to do this for me. Convey to my brothers in the jungle that the king and queen have done all their very best to make me happy, a golden cage, all kinds of fruits, nice things of all sorts; and they love me so much; but with all the attention they give me I long for the forest; and the desire to dwell among you—free as I used to be before, always holds my mind. But I see no way out of it, but pray send me your goodwill and your love. One only lives in hope. Perhaps some day my wish will be granted."

The king went into the forest and approached the tree from which the parrot was taken and said to the brothers of the parrot: "Oh, parrots, there is one who I have taken from among you to my palace; and I am very fond of him, and he receives all the attention I can give. This is your brother's message."

They listened to the message very attentively, and one after the other dropped to the ground and seemed dead.

The king was depressed beyond measure. Spell-bound, he could not understand what it was that he said that should affect the feelings of those parrots so

much. The loving parrots could not bear his message. And he thought "What a sin I have committed, to have destroyed so many lives." He turned back to his palace, and went to his parrot, and said "How foolish, O parrot, to give me such a message that as soon as your brothers hear it, one after another dropped down and they all lay dead before me."

The parrot listened to this, and looked up gently to the sky, and he fell down too!

The king was still more sad. "How foolish I was! First I gave his message to them and killed them, and now I give their message to him and kill him also." It is all a bewilderment to the king. What is the meaning of it all?

He commanded his servants to take this dead parrot in a gold tray and bury him with all ceremonies. The servant took him out of the cage with great respect, and loosed the chains from his feet; and then as they were laying him out, the parrot suddenly flew away and sat upon the roof.

The king said, "O parrot, you betray me." The parrot said "O king, this was the aim of my soul, which is the aim of all souls. My brothers in the jungle were not dead. I had asked them to show me the way to freedom, and they showed me. I did as they told me, and now I am free!"

There is a surah in the Quran which says "Mutu Kabla Anta Mutu" which means "Die before death." Another poet says "Only he attains to the peace of the Lord who loses himself." "No-one has seen God and lived" (Ex. 33: 20). To see God we must be non-existent.

What does all this mean? It means that when we see our being with open eyes, we see that there are two aspects to our being—the false and the true. The false life is that of this body and mind, which is only existent as long as the life is within. In the absence of that life, the body cannot go on. We take the true life for the false and the false for the true.

Dying is this: when there is a fruit or there is something sweet and good to the taste, the child comes to its mother and says "Will you give it me?" Although it would have given joy to the mother to eat it, she gives it to the child. The eating if it by the child is enjoyed by the mother. That is death. She enjoys her life in the joy of another. Those who rejoice in the joy of another though at their own expense, have taken the step towards true life. If you are pleased so much by giving another a good coat which you would have liked to wear yourself, if you enjoy that you are on the first step.

If you enjoy a beautiful thing so much that you would like to have it, and then give that joy to another, enjoying it in *his* experience, you are dead. That is your death. You live more than he. Your life is vaster, your life is deeper, your life is greater.

Seemingly it is a renunciation, an annihilation. But in truth it is a mastery. The real meaning of crucifixion is to crucify this false self, and so resurrect the true self. As long as the false self is not crucified, the true self is still not realised. By Sufis it is called fana—annihilation. All the attempts made by true sages and seekers after real truth are for the one aim of attaining to everlasting life.

The Ideal Life.

WHEN speaking on the subject of ideal life, the words of the prophet of Islam may be quoted, where he says: "Every soul has its own religion." Which means that every soul has a certain direction such as it has made as the goal to attain to during life. This goal is a certain ideal which depends on the soul's evolution.

For instance, a young man in a family understands that "the responsibility of my mother and father, who are old, is on me. It is a duty, and not only a duty, but a virtue on my part, that I should devote all that I earn, and every service that I can render, to them in order to be useful to them in their old age." Religion, in the language of the Hindoo, is Dharma, which means "duty." His idea of virtue is that if he can be helpful to his aged parents by money, by service, he will devote both to them and he considers that that is a virtue. That is the ideal thing for him to do. So he does it. Perhaps he does not perceive anything beyond it, but that which he does perceive is virtue in his eyes. And that is why he wishes to do it, and in it is his satisfaction.

Another person is in business, is the agent of a firm. He thinks "I am paid by my firm, and the head of my firm is so kind and nice that it is my first duty to prove myself faithful to my firm." He labours with enthusiasm and great zeal from morning to evening, seeing a great virtue in serving righteously, although he does not pretend to religion or spirituality. But he considers *that* as his virtue, and as long as he considers that he is doing his duty, he is following his religion.

Religion in the East is not made a thing apart from one's life. Business, profession, and other things as

one side of life, and going to church one day in the week as the other side,—these together constitute religion according to the West; and a prayer before going to rest—that is "religion." But strictly speaking, the *life* is religion. The business or industry or domestic life, or whatever it is, when you have that ideal before you in whatever occupation you are concerned, and carry it out, being wishful to be worthy of it,—that is your religion.

In the Hindoo language, the same word Dharma means both "duty" and "religion." Both are expressed by one word. "This is your dharma" (meaning "your faith.") How beautiful the thought! Whatever kind of duty it is, so long as you have an ideal before you and are performing that duty, you are walking in the path of religion.

The prophet says "Every soul has its own religion." We with our narrowness of faith or belief accuse others of belonging to another religion, another chapel or church. "This temple is better, that faith is better." The whole world has kept fighting and devastating itself just because of not understanding that each sort of religion is peculiar to itself.

Therefore the ideal life is in following one's own ideal. It is not in checking other people's ideals. If a certain thing is one's ideal, that does not imply that another person will agree that it is best to offer prayers ten times a day. He may be doing better in following his religion in his shop than in going to a mosque and offering up a prayer twenty times a day. Perhaps a person to whom that is ideal cannot see that the other's way is ideal also. Leave everyone to follow his own ideal.

Is it right for everybody to follow his own ideal? Does the ideal remain the same all the time? No, the ideal grows and improves as man grows and improves, with his years.

Sometimes in his life, a person thinks that it would be ideal to have a beautiful house and a beauti-

ful estate and good clothes and all manner of comforts. From that moment that should be the path he ought to pursue. But then he comes to another ideal. He comes to think "My surroundings are not sufficient if the people in the town are not happy or in good surroundings." From that times he cares less for his house and beautiful things, and goes in the town every day and seeks to improve the health and happiness of others. "The poor in the town should be looked after." This is his new ideal. Before he evolved his new ideal he was only enjoying his beautiful home; he was living up to a lower ideal.

And then, later on, he may come to say "Never mind about my town, I think of my whole country." The whole nation comes in for consideration. What is beneficial to it, and what are the things that should be improved? His fortune may not be very great, perhaps the town is not so beautiful as that of one who is thinking only about his town; but he is thinking about the whole nation, and so his ideal is still greater! It does not matter to him in which town he lives, his life is in the whole country, the whole nation.He becomes the spirit of the whole nation. That is his ideal.

Is man the same, whatever his appearance? We see now that it is all a matter of his ideal as to whether a man differs from his neighbour, whether he is heavenly or earthly, as high as the Devas (the heavenly beings) or as low as the Demons. His ideal makes him as high as one, or as low as the lowest demons. The greatness of man lies in the greatness of his ideal.

That which makes us esteem those whom we esteem, is their ideal. That which raises man from earth to heaven is his ideal. And that which pulls man down from the heavens to the earth is also his ideal. When he does not live up to his ideal he falls to earth, and when he raises his ideal he goes from earth to heaven. He can rise to any height according to the rise of his ideal.

Therefore the Sura in Quran: "We sent our trust to the mountains, and the mountains would not accept it. Then we sent our trust to the trees, and the trees would not accept it. Then we sent our trust to man, and man has carried it. It is therefore that we have made man higher than all other creatures" (Chap. xxxiii). How true it is! This trust is our ideal. One person thinks, "Oh, it does not matter; if I have a good dinner, never mind what others have"; another thinks "It is no pleasure to me to have had a good dinner since my family still starve; it is much more happiness to me if I have only a frugal dinner, so long as my family also are well satisfied." This raises him higher than the person who thinks only of his own happiness. A third person thinks: "It does not matter how I live, as long as I have brought some happiness to the people of my town (or village); *that* would be worth while." His ideal is greater.

The trust that is sent by Heaven is the ideal given to man. That is his charge in life, his responsibility in life. To take care of this and prove worthy of this responsibility and position that has been given to us,—*that* it is that we ought to prove to be our ideal, our religion, our dharma. In the Gospel (Luke 19. 17) the 'pound' represents the same ideal; at first it is small, but it expands as we go through life.

This explains the fact that the sin and virtue of two people cannot be the same. For instance, there may be two students, and one is sent to a university and is studying for an examination. There are only two months left, but he happens to see a beautiful play advertised. He thinks he would like to see this play, and yet there is so short a time for study"; "But then it is only one evening, and I can soon make that up. I will go just this once, and it will make no difference." He disregards the importance of the ideal he had—that of passing his examination. He has changed his ideal to thinking the examination

does not matter. So he goes this once, but next day he sees another advertised, and again gives in to his pleasure; and again and again. His fondness for the plays grows, and the evenings go by, and the time comes when he is no longer ready for his examination. So he fails. Seeing the plays was a sin, not because it was a sinful action, but because he failed to keep to his ideal. He was meant to study to pass his examination.

Again, there is the other student. He is trying to become a good play-writer, or orator, or actor. He sees the same advertisement. He goes to the play and enjoys it very much. Every play he attends adds to his experience, and increases his knowledge. The same action has become a virtue, because by going to the theatre and giving his thoughts to the plays he has accomplished his ideal. Therefore the same action, whether it be sin or virtue,—all depends on our ideal. We have to follow and prove ourselves worthy of that ideal, and the farther we go the more does our ideal develop. However small it was at the time, we are always progressing as long as we follow it, and wish to prove ourselves worthy of it. But when we go astray from our ideal we lose the track!

If there be anything wrong or evil in the world, it is this: going out of the track from the Ideal that we have placed before us.

A person may say that a religious ideal is the true ideal, or a moral life, a spiritual life, a practical life! Many people say it is much better to be in the world, to live in the world. Others say it is better to live away from the wicked world, to get away and live in the forests, the jungles, the caves: "This is the only way to live." Others say "just make merry, eat, drink, enjoy life." Others say, "The good life is in the service of man; as much service as we can give, as much kindness, as much love,—that is the ideal."

If you ask a hundred people, you will get a hundred

ideals. Everyone thinks that everyone who follows that ideal is the best person, and whoever is contrary to his ideal is a wicked person. Sufis, mystics, ascetics, with all their high ideals, have been killed, beheaded, and tortured by different religious authorities because the religious authorities had a different ideal, and were convinced *their* ideal was right, and the other wrong. "My church is the only church which exists, the only one which can teach you the real truth." Is it not true that every church or every faith in which there is a willingness for others to join them, thinks that their ideal and their belief is the best to follow? That is man's foolishness. He wishes every one to follow the same ideal as he. He does not know that the prophets whom the whole world may follow, often could not get their brother or their wife or their child to follow them!

If you read the history of Abraham, Moses or Mahomet,—you will see what happened. It was difficult for their own people to follow them however many followers they may have had, because every soul has its peculiar ideal, and it wants to go on towards it.

True preaching would be to ask everyone to develop his own ideal, however wrong it might appear to be to the outsider, for the moment. Let him develop his faculty of doing right in his own judgment. You will see that in time he will develop the real thing, because in him is the Light of God and It will never misguide him.

Once I was with a sage, whom many people went to see. He pleased them all, and he was not fond of disputing or discussing, because to a sage there is nothing to discuss! Discussion is for those who say "What I say is right, and what you say is wrong." A sage never says such a thing; hence there is no discussion! The world is always fighting and discussing and disputing!

Many would come and try and dispute with him, but he did his best to avoid dispute. I was very fond

of hearing his way of dealing with enquirers. My friends were ready to discuss "What is the ideal life?" He said, "As you think it." But my friends were not satisfied with this; they wanted a discussion. They answer: "Do you think this worldly life with so many responsibilities, strife from morning to evening,—can this be the ideal life?" He says, "Yes." "Do you not think that the life you lead—retirement aud seclusion—is the ideal life?" He answers "Yes!" "But how can we give up our present life, our responsibilities to our children, our occupations, and all these things that take up so much time; how can we leave it in order to follow your ideal life?" He says "Do not leave it." "But if we do not leave it, how can we get along in the spiritual life?" Then the sage asks "What do you mean by the spiritual life?" "We mean by spiritual life a life like yours.' He says, "If you think my life is a spiritual life be like me; if you think your life is the spiritual life, keep to it. Which life is best, it is not possible to say. Which life is ideal, it is not possible to say. If you think your worldly strifes bring you happiness, just keep to them; if you think my life gives you happiness, give yours up. Whatever makes you happy and makes you think you are doing right do it from that moment, and see what is the result. If it gives you more happiness, go on regardless of what others say. If it gives you happiness, if you are satisfied while doing it, while reaping its effect, then it is all right. Go on with it, and you are always blessed.

Therefore when the question of the ideal life comer up, no-one on earth can tell you that this particulas mode is the ideal. The one who presumes to tell you so says absurd things. He only tells you what *he* thinks ideal; it is not necessarily the ideal for you. Whatever *you* think best, follow it! you are on the right path, in whatever direction it may lead, whether to heaven or to earth,—both will lead to the same goal in the end, if pursued to the end.

The Journey to the Goal.

THE word "journey" may be applied to the life. As life has two aspects, so it is either a journey or a goal.

Why should life be called a journey? Because it is a changeable experience, because there is a change in nature and there is a change of experience. One goes from one experience to another, and that is also the meaning of the word "journey,"—going from one place to the other; to pass from one experience to the other. The whole life, the external life, is nothing but a succession of experiences, one after the other, night and day. That is why it is called a journey.

But there is a part of life, the life from which this life of changes has sprung—the life which is everlasting, which is eternal, the life to which everything and all things return,—that life is the "goal," Therefore life is not only a journey, it is a goal! The goal is the stable part of life, the source of life. The manifested life called "creation" is the journey.

In this way we see there are really two journeys. There is the journey from the goal to the life in the world, and there is the journey from the life in the world to the goal. And both journeys are natural. As it is natural to go from the eternal goal, so it is necessary to go from the changing life to the life which is unchangeable.

Which is the desirable thing in life—to seek for the goal or to dwell in this changing life? The answer is, every person's desire is according to his evolution. That which he is ready for is the desirable for him. Milk is desirable food for the infant, other food for the grown-up person. Every stage in life has its own appropriate desirable thing.

The desire to attain to some goal must be there before reaching it. When he does not feel the desire, it is not necessary for the person to seek it.

All things are worth while when you seek after them; then only do you have their value; then only are you happy to have them. You do not need the things you do not know and do not desire. You need them when you know them and desire them.

The law of Nature is that this eternal life comes gradually, stage by stage,—through rocks, through vegetables, through animals, through man. Its depth is intelligence, named 'Ilm by the mystic. The joy of the whole life is the fulness of Intelligence, and Intelligence comes to its fulness in the human kingdom. It is in the latter that Life and the Primitive Intelligence has its eyes opened to see, and understand and think. "God slept in the mineral kingdom, dreamed in the vegetable, woke in the animal, and became self-conscious in the human." But in the human stage we find that every person has not the same capability of thinking and understanding and knowing. The word "man" has come from the Sanscrit word "manhu" which means "mind." It is his thinking quality that distinguishes man. Therefore the real man is "the thinker," "he who is capable of thinking." The more thoughtful, the more awakened the mind, the more fulness of that attribute for which the whole world was created can be found in man.

When he begins to think, the thought comes "why was all this created?" The answer comes, "all this gradual development is towards one single development—that of human life; and in human life, the development of mind. Through the whole universe that which has really developed is the mind, which begins to know the use of all things and all forms, their secret and the way in which all things and all forms are controlled. Another question that comes to the thinking mind after realising the secret of all

things and all forms, and after knowing the way in which all forms and all things are utilised, is "is this enough?" "is there something else that man wishes?" He finds that there are four different desires; (1) the desire to know; (2) the desire to love and be loved; (3) the desire for joy; (4) the desire for peace.

After the toil of the day, there is a desire to rest and be away from people. Then there is the desire to get a certain amount of pleasure or joy in things one feels delighted in, as by going to museums and theatres. Another finds a comfort and happiness in loving and being loved. The scholarly mind who wishes to know and understand things, has happiness and joy when he understands them.

If any of these four desires are absent, one is unhappy. One realises that the world is engaged in four different kinds of occupations. To one they are repellant and undesirable, to another they are desirable. Everyone has his own occupation in which he seems to be happy, but that of another seems useless to him, or foolish, or undesirable.

In Sanscrit these occupations are called Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha. The occupation of Dharma is the love, affection, attachment or infatuation to such an extent that nothing else matters in life—money, position, nothing. Dharma is the thing he wants. It is his one occupation.

Artha is the occupation where a person is without money; he wishes to be rich, to have property, to make trade prosper. Love does not appeal to him. He calls the lover crazy, foolish, out of his mind. He says "everybody will love you if you have money! It is crazy to go after love."

Kama is the occupation of pursuing duty. Such a person says: "these things are not right. The right thing is to do one's duty." Perhaps he is interested in his family, in family duty, to mother, father, wife, children, saying "this is my virtue";

or in persons, people, nation, poor, rich. Whatever he considers his duty he gives his life for it. He may be a soldier, a teacher, a merchant; but he feels justified according as he does his duty in each. The person who is after money thinks he is a fool. The lover thinks *he* is a fool too! For him the first thing is "to convert persons to my church," "to do something good to my nation, my city, my village."

The fourth occupation, Moksha, is still different. This is to work for paradise, for heaven, for heavenly peace. "What is the use of both bothering about your duty? the whole thing is heaven; that is the happiness to look for. All things will change, all will go—the wealth, the earthly beloved; it is all changeable. But the paradise, the happiness one can get hereafter, after all the suffering here, that is the unchangeable." He is pious. He suffers all his life. He is going through all his pains. He is seeking for that paradise. The lover may say "how foolish; my paradise is on earth. My beloved is my love. What a foolish person to sacrifice all, and who knows what will come hereafter?" The other says "I can create my paradise with my wealth."

These four are diverse paths! And each considers his own the best and wisest.

The Sufi looks on all with tolerance, and knows that each is for each. The path of the lover is for him, the path of seeking for wealth for that one, the seeker after paradise is following his—it is all a journey! It is only that there are four different routes through which the journey is made. The Sufi sees the same goal at the end of each. The lover has to meet the seeker after wealth, and both have to meet the one who has done his duty. Therefore at the end of their journey there is a certain place where they can meet. What does it matter if you do not go through that path? Let each choose the way that belongs to his own temperament and tendency. Therefore the Sufi does not trouble. He gives no

preference to one or the other. He sees the journey of life being made along one or other of these roads. The saying of Buddha "forgive all" comes true. Forgiveness does not come by learning, it comes by understanding that a person should be allowed to travel along that path which is suited to his temperament. As long as he *is* journeying with open eyes, let him journey!

The great thing is that one should journey with one single desire. There should be the single desire—whether to love a beloved, to collect wealth, or to do some good for the world of humanity, or to attain paradise. There should be the desire to journey to the Goal.

So many do not know which is the Goal or what it is. One thinks wealth is the Goal, another Paradise, another the Beloved. They do not see that there is a still further Goal. They are naturally prompted by the desire to get to the goal, and yet are not conscious of the further goal.

As it is said in the Bible—"seek ye the kingdom of God and all things will be added to thee." The desire is for that kingdom of perfection, the goal of everything. How can a person desire that which he does not realise the meaning of? Desire comes by knowing the thing to be desired. If you do not know what the goal is like, how are you to be attracted to it?

Rumi, the great Persian poet, speaking about this, says that "every soul is a captive on earth," and this captivity is in the limited physical body, which he calls his individuality or personality; and the nature of the soul is peace, and joy, and freedom. In this captivity it lacks these things. That is why the soul begins to think "I want this, or that"—a perfection of duty, a beloved, wealth. Reason may suggest "this is it," and the soul goes after it. Having acquired it, he begins to feel, "no, this is not the thing that I have wanted." All this shows that

there is a constant desire of the soul to find its own nature, and until it finds it, it is always busy looking for something which it does not know. Is it not true in the life of every individual in this world, that whatever desire one has, during that time during when he has not attained it, he is very unhappy, and eager and anxious to achieve it? He is longing and suffering and doing all he can to attain it, but when once he has succeeded, he does not feel happy! No! there is at once a new desire! If he has a thousand, he wants a million. If he has done one duty, there is another, and after that another. So it is with love affairs. So it is with paradise. He will never feel contented and satisfied because at bottom it is not the desire that he is really concerned with. Though he crosses the boundary of the wall of the desire, he finds himself again with a new desire. And this itself proves the fact that there is only one fundamental desire underlying all others—that *desire for spiritual perfection.*

One is not capable of setting out on the journey to the eternal goal unless the four desires and occupations have been surpassed. In the first place, the motive limits one to a certain routine along certain lines of accomplishment, and it does not allow that person to accomplish anything beyond the scope of that particular motive. As long as a person has the longing to attain to any particular motive he cannot go further. That is why the Sages of the East have always said, "rise above the earthly motives." They have said "get your motives in life accomplished, and then that itself will lead you to a stage from which you can rise above them and above the earthly desires of the body." They have never said "stop, and go into the jungle, and see life from our own point of view." Everybody's path is for himself. Let everyone accomplish his own desires so as to be able to rise above them to the Eternal Goal.

There are four different paths recognised as leading

to the attainment of that goal. The Sufis call them Zikar, Fikar, Kasab, Shaghal. The Yogis call them by the names, Hathayoga, Rajayoga, Mantrayoga, Bhaktiyoga. *Hathayoga* is the path of abstinence. This is a form of self-control. You read of how people practice different postures, sitting quiet and trying to slow down the circulation or follow a certain rhythm, or quietening the nerves by a certain kind of breathing. This is all a process of mastery of the body and mind. Sufis call this mastery Walayat.

It is not study alone, it is practice that gives help in controlling the nerves of the body, the rhythm of the circulation, the control of the mechanism of the body. Perhaps you have heard that many a time the adepts are able to stop every pulsation of the body for the time being, at will, for a few seconds. There have been experiments made by doctors (at the religious Congress at Chicago) verifying this power. However surprising it may seem for the external pulse to be controlled in this way, what would it seem if we could see still more deeply into the life of the adept! the control of mind is so much greater! Words can never explain it. It must be one's own experience. The control of the self means the control of everything.

What does it mean when we see a person fail time after time, or another person succeed time after time? It is just a matter of holding the rein of our affairs in our hands. When there is no rein there is failure. Failure means that there has been lack of self-control —whether it be a failure in affairs or in health. Illness always comes when a person has lost the control of self. It is because this is the main ideal of metaphysics that Hathayoga has been considered of the most value. All the miracles and all the wonders that have ever been known and done in this world are by those who have been able by abstinence to control themselves and therefore control life. However much were said about it, it would still not express it. To begin with, a person is puzzled by it; and he

wonders whether he is to believe it or not. That is why in the East the adepts never speak of their experiences in the spiritual life. They only tell their disciples to do, and practice it for years: "that will make it clear to you."

The other path on the spiritual journey is the *Rajayoga*. This is the path of life, the following of all the experiences, of the responsibilities. On this path there are four stages:

(1) Brhama Charya-shrama is that path when a person works with intellect. He wishes to know about, reason about, and understand things. It is the intellectual attainment of knowledge.

(2) Gruhastha-shrama is the attainment of knowledge by the experience of the responsibility of life,—of home, and children, and servants, and neighbours, and friends, and enemies; the experience of living among them, doing one's duty to them, loving them, being kind to them, and taking upon one's shoulders every kind of responsibility; the experiences of welcoming the neighbour, the friend, with a smile through all distress and despair, and amid all difficulties. This itself becomes a lesson.

(3) Wanaprastha-shrama is the service of the world, of humanity. Here the work is to consider not only one's own family as one's responsibility, but also one's townsfolk, race, the world at large.

(4) Sannyasa-shrama is retirement and love of solitude and silence, and contemplation and resiguation to all the things of this world.

By these four stages of development perfection is gradually attained.

The Mantrayoga, strictly speaking, is the attainment of perfection by means of wisdom, and understanding life, and seeing through it. The best word to use for such a person is "seer." One sees into life, into the depth of life, through a person, through an affair, through a thing. Not only outside on the surface, but through, by means of concentration, as with a

torch, as with a light in the hand that illuminates the things seen. This seeing is called gyana. The journey through life is made by that means.

In this case the mysticism of sound comes when a person begins to see and understand; he begins to see also that he gets power by sound, that in every vowel, word, composition, one finds there is a certain effect or element, because the whole life and the whole manifestation is the outcome of what may be called in modern words "vibrations." The scientist to-day says "life is motion." But the mystic has said so for thousands of years. At the same time he has worked with the sound-god, or vibration-god. He has worked with life according to the law of vibrations and seen what great power the vibration has. The whole of what is called mantrayoga is based on this law of sound or vibrations. But this is a very big subject.

The Bhaktiyoga is the most important yoga, especially for those who have the quality of love and kindness, because all beauty that there is in life is after all what we call love. From it all the virtues spring. The whole beauty of life is in it. The English Song says "the light of life dies when love is done." The whole life's light is in love; and when the heart is void of love, he is living and yet not living! He is dead. When the heart is asleep he is as dead in this world, for one can only love by the heart. But love does not mean "give-and-take." That is only a trade. It is selfishness. To give sixpence and receive a shilling is not love. Love is when one loves for the sake of love, when you cannot help but love, cannot do anything but love. He is not forced to love. There is no virtue in it. He does not love because another does. It is there. It cannot be helped. It is the only thing that makes a person alive. If a person hates another, what can he know of love? Can you love one person fully if at the same time you cannot bestow a kind glance on some other particular

person? Can you say you love one person fully when you cannot bear him to be loved by someone also? Can you hate a person when love is sprinkled in your heart? Love is the water of the Ganges. It is itself a purification. As the Bible says, "God is love." When love is awakened in the heart, God is awakened there.

When one has journeyed, he has reached the goal as soon as his heart has reached love.

The Sufi says: "the Kaaba, the divine place, the paradise, is the heart of the human being." That is why he has respect for every heart. Every heart is his Kaaba, his shrine. The human heart is the place toward which he bows, for in this heart is God!

The Presence of God.

SPEAKING about the presence of God I should say that everything present seems to us real, and that which is absent seems to us less than real; and therefore the conditions in life which are facing us seem for the moment to be real and have their fullest effect on us. If they are joyful, if they are sorrowful, if they bring us happiness, if they bring us unhappiness —in all these circumstances they are the ones that are real for that moment; when they are not present they are only a tale that is told.

During the night, while a person is dreaming, whether it be a dream of horror or fear or not, that is real to him for that moment, or whether it be a joy, it is real for that moment. When the morning breaks, and the eyes are opened—then he calls it a dream. The experience has become absent. It was only during the presence of the experience that he took it to be real. Once it has passed, he calls it a dream.

Now if we can only think: our disappointments, our sorrows and our pleasures and happinesses and joys at different times in life, in the past—are they nothing to us now? At the moment of intensity, of experience, of pain, it seemed as if we could not live a moment longer; but when it is past, the pain gone, and we look on it to-day—it is only a tale that was told. If a thousand years have passed, it is only a dream, a story, to-day. True, there is some impression that we are holding, but that which is past is past. What counts with us is the present, what is before us just now is the only thing that counts.

People have different ideas about God. To some, He is "the Creator." That means: "He was present when the world was created, but now He is absent."

To some, He is "the Judge"; He belongs to the Day of Judgment. Therefore He is absent just now, since they perceive there is no justice in the world. To such persons there is a hope that some day they will be placed before the Judge of the world and then he will know that God perhaps is really there; at present He is not. Then there is another person who may think "God was present when He created me, but He is not before me now; He is not present where I am, for He is in heaven. I am on the earth. Therefore I am not in the presence of God."

In this way it is clear that not only unbelievers in God, but even the believers in Him, who look upon him, as a heavenly Being who dwells in Heaven,—all are absent from God just the same!

Then, coming to the philosophy of "Presence"—we find that what we see and hear and experience with our senses around us, about us, and in our surroundings, is what we call "present." That which our senses cannot perceive, that seems to be absent. But in reality there is something else present besides all that we perceive; and in spite of the presence of all the things of our comfort or pleasure and happiness, man generally is unhappy by an unconscious longing for it. One can be in great agony living in a palace, surrounded with all pleasures; and in spite of the wealth and attentions one receives, may yet be unhappy. And there is a possibility that a person may be very happy even in the absence of all things of pleasure, happiness, and luxury and comfort.

What is the meaning of this? It is that the world outside is a more distant world to us than the world within; and there is a world within that is immediate to our being, and that is the first we are conscious of. Although we are in the presence of the world without, we do not recognise that world-of-within. And yet its effect is just the same. That means, a person who lives in happy surroundings and luxuries and sources of pleasure and comfort, may be envied and imagined

as very happy, and a 'lucky man.' In reality, however, he is very unhappy perhaps. The external world has given him all he wished, but the inner world, the inner being is unhappy. There is, then, something absent, and he wants it to be present. There is something missing inwardly. That shows that the inner presence is required; the external presence is not the only comfort.

But we ask "the inner presence—of what?" Many will say "we know we are unhappy at different times in spite of wealth, comfort, happiness, friend, beloved." Perhaps they will not believe that it is some other lack, the lack of divine ideal, that makes them unhappy. Others consider that life requires a scope for progress, and that it is a lack of scope that causes the greatest unhappiness. Such persons think "I cannot prosper in the work that I am doing, I cannot be any better than what they are"; such a thought is worse than death. Life is unlimited and it wants a scope to expand and rise. Without that scope, life is unhappy. You find this not only among human beings, but also in nature. Just see the constant progress of sun and moon, rising and reaching the summit, the zenith, and then setting. See the rising of the crescent and how it progresses till it becomes a full moon. That means there is a scope between the crescent and the full moon. This progress is the only thing that gives happiness or pleasure or joy in life; its absence means nothing but death.

However disappointed a person may be at not being in a particular profession or in a particular calling or rank in life, he develops enthusiasm and energy as soon as he sees some scope for progress. His disappointment is only when he sees no more scope. Though he were in the depths of the earth it would not matter as long as he can think "I shall some day rise to some height."

Another wonderful thing that we see, which supports this philosophy, is the tendency of everything in

nature to rise. The tendency of earth is to rise as mountains and hills. When we go and see the mountains and hills, how high they are, our heart also seems uplifted; as we mount them our heart becomes uplifted; as we look upon them from below, it seems as if the earth itself is desiring to rise and go upward.

Then, when we look upon the perfection of water as we see it in the sea, the ocean, it also rises as waves; and every wave, as it rises upward, seems to be stretching its hands upward as if to say "take me up, take me up, higher and higher." It is the same desire that is behind all nature, making it strive to rise upward and reach something higher.

So it is with fire. They call people sun-worshippers or fire-worshippers in Persia. Really speaking, it is only a symbol to show how in its blaze the fire wants to ascend. It shares the desire of all things to go up.

So it is in our own life. A person who is after wealth desires to be richer, richer, richer; better and better; the person who is in a position, his desire is to be higher and higher up in his position. Whatever the goal, every heart's desire is to reach high.

But these are all external desires. The external surroundings and environments cannot suffice the purpose of man because there is a higher world. We may call a person wicked because he always delights in doing evil and causing another person harm, and in being unkind; but were we to study his nature we should find that he also has a dislike for evil and for wickedness; it is only that his sense of justice has not yet awakened. If evil is done to him he feels it; it is only the evil he does to another that he does not feel. He is in the intoxication of doing the evil and therefore does not feel it. That he does not like it when another does it to him shows that he also seeks goodness.

There is a desire for goodness in every heart. When a person thinks of goodness, loves goodness, admires goodness and looks for goodness in every person in the

world, that person so to speak collects good. When you recognise the goodness in any person it is like collecting the seeds of goodness and sowing them in one's heart.

But when a person looks for evil, then he can see nothing but evil in every person. In that way he becomes so accustomed to it, that his world becomes full of evil. He has contemplated on it and looked for it and creates it. You will always see a complaining person complaining about this person or that having done wrong. You will find perhaps he has a record of a thousand people having done wrong. The world is a record in his heart—a record of all those who have done wrong or evil. If you study him you will see he has as much evil as he has recorded—perhaps more; because if one has evil, he collects a thousand evils; he becomes a store-keeper of evil, and yet discontented with evil. When a person tells another person about evil, he thinks he himself is so good, so free of evil. This side of human nature we see even in children. One child will come and tell how naughty the other is, thinking, "I must be called good." Such a tendency grows and develops; the life gathers the wickedness of all people; the heart becomes impressed; in time the evil is stored up. That which is the store becomes the treasure, the world-within. He who stores evil cannot see good, because there is no good in this world that has not a little spark of evil in it; there is no evil in this world that has not a little spark of good. If a person only tried to find the spark of good he could find it, and if a person seeks to find a little spark of evil in every good, that also he can do.

One person says: "he is very good." The neighbour says "yes—he is good, but you do not know this about him—I will just tell you what he does!" Is there no-one who will gainsay when another praises a person? There has never been anyone in history about whom somebody has not said evil!

What is really good?

The answer is, there is no such thing as "good" or "evil"; there is "beauty." That which is beautiful, we call good. That which is "ugly" compared with the beautiful, we call "evil"—whether manner, custom, idea, thought or action. That shows that this whole phenomenon of the universe is the phenomenon of beauty. Every soul has an inclination to admire beauty, to seek for beauty, to love beauty, and to develop beauty; even God loves beauty.

In all ages, the various religions have given different standards of good and evil, naming them "virtue" and "sin." The virtue of one nation has been the sin of another; the virtue of the other the sin of the former. Travel, as we may, through the world, read the histories and traditions of nations as we may, we shall still find that what one calls evil, another calls good. That is why no one can succeed in making a standard for good and evil. The discrimination between good and evil is in man's soul. Every man can judge that for himself, because in every man is the sense of admiring beauty. But he is not satisfied with that which he does himself; he feels a discomfort, a disgust with his own efforts. Many people who continue some weakness, or some mistake, or are intoxicated by that particular action which the world calls evil or they themselves call evil, yet go on doing it—a day also comes when they are disgusted. Then they wish for suicide. There is no more happiness for them. Happiness only lies in thinking or doing that which one considers beautiful. That act becomes a virtue, goodness. The goodness is that beauty.

What is beauty? One sees beauty of form and beauty without form—beauty of thought, beauty of feeling, beauty of ideal. Not only does one see beauty in the flowers and fruits and trees, but one sees still greater beauty in imaginations, and thoughts. One feels one could give all one's wealth or life for a beautiful thought or a beautiful dream.

There have been a great many rewards given in

ancient times to the poets, the writers, the thinkers, expressing their beauty in poetry and writing. At the same time, one comes to the realisation that sufficient rewards can never be paid for beauty of thought, beauty of imagination. But there is a still greater beauty—the feeling of kindness, of self-sacrifices of devotion, of love. The beauty which has been so impressed upon the world, that never dies,—that seen in the life of Christ—the forgiveness, the love for humanity, the gentleness, the humility—nothing can be compared with it, it is so great. Therefore it cannot be limited to name or form or to the external world. There is beauty of thought and great beauty of feeling, of sentiment, of kindness, of self-sacrifice, of selflessness. And yet there is a still greater progress —the seeking of the source of beauty. As it is said in the English language: "the gift is nothing without the giver." There is no doubt a beauty in listening to the composition of a great musician, but there is at the same time a desire in the heart to meet that composer and to personally thank him. What a satisfaction! You have not only heard the music but seen the composer! You can say how delighted you are, and how much you are pleased with his music.

Or, there is a very good picture which you have admired. Yet your still greater delight would be to be able to say to the painter, "how much I have enjoyed it; this picture has really pleased me." So with the love of goodness—that constant gathering of goodness, the constant comfort of looking for goodness in everybody, the constant consciousness of doing good to another, the constant delight in one's own goodness. There is no limit to such progress. One may say "this goodness belonged to my father, to my mother, to my beloved, to my friend, to my acquaintance, to a stranger." But when it is all summed up—to Whom does it belong? Is there Nobody whom I can thank for it?

A person may see different places and palaces, beautiful gardens and museums, and meet people of

all kinds—but that would be the last desire? To meet the king! "If I could greet him, since all the goodness that I have seen and admired makes me wish to see its representative."

A person may have corresponded a long time with another at a long distance. In every letter you read delightful things and admire his thoughts so much. Will not your greatest pleasure be to see him and be face to face with him?

So, in the end, it is the desire of every soul to be face to face with that Owner of beauty to Whom all beauty and goodness belongs!

Now whether we look at this subject religiously or philosophically or scientifically, from all three points there is no difference. There is only the one conclusion —that the whole life, with all its manifestations and variety is nothing but the manifestation of One Life. The believer and the unbeliever will both agree that there is one life behind it all, one source of all the manifestation, one constant life which is as a stimulus, a food, a source and goal for the whole manifestation. No-one who sees this with sentiment, thought, feeling, and admiration, will deny for one moment that it would be the greatest happiness to come into touch in some way or other with "that Source of all beauty and goodness that I have sought all my life and always admired in my progress along the path."

No doubt there may be some souls who are so absorbed in their daily wants and present pursuits as not to feel inclined to make this search after the Source. But at the same time an unconscious yearning to get to that Source is always present. If it is not face to face with the Lord (1 Co: 13: 12), it will be an ideal—if fond of music—to see the composer; if fond of painting —to see the artist; if of reform—to see the leader of reform; if of great people—to see the greatest man there is. Whatever he may be fond of, he will be always very glad to see the person who identifies himself with that beauty which he admires.

But how can one be face to face with the Deity, the Formless, the Nameless—Whom one can never picture, never dream of? This is a wise question. Unless it is solved a person is a pretender who claims to be face to face with his Lord. And the answer is, "is the Deity a separate Being, or is He formless, nameless, above all limitations?"

No doubt it is the fact of the desire for the presence of God that accounts for man's tendency to make idols and worship them. It was the desire to see the deity and worship him that made man stand before the sun and worship it, to stand before a tree and worship it. But it could not satisfy because it was taking and worshipping a limited thing. Really speaking, the first lesson in the presence of God is, as a philosopher says, "make one for yourself, if you have no god." How true it is that before you come to the real conception of God the first thing is to build Him in your heart. The word "God" comes from "goodness," no doubt. But its original in the old Hebrew "Yod," "yaw" means "ideal." The Yaw has been changed to "G." What is "ideal"? Ideal is that which we make. We say we make an ideal. When we think a person is so very good we think of his goodness, and that goodness surrounds that person, and our artistic tendency and idealistic tendency helps to paint that person's goodness as beautiful, as nicely as we can. We can make it thoroughly good by our artistic faculty. That is called "ideal." When man wishes a person to be wicked, he paints his wickedness and all the badness that is there; he makes him an ideal of wickedness. When he thinks of his mother or friend he paints and paints till he makes the ideal of goodness. No one can paint it for you as well as you can for yourself!

There is a saying of Majnun, the great lover of Persia: "Oh, Majnun, your girl is not as beautiful as you think; you are sacrificing your life, you grieve for ages and ages for that girl; but she is not so beautiful!" Majnun answers, "My Leila you should see

with my eyes! It is the eyes of my heart you need. My heart has made my Leila.'' That is called ''ideal;'' and the ideal of perfection, of course, makes it beauty. The ideal of perfection is the ideal of ''God,'' and you will turn to it in your troubles or worries or fears. If there is a fear of death, yet you have that ideal by your side; you feel protected; if you are disappointed in anything, still there is that ideal by your side to reassure you; you say ''I do not mind, I am not really disappointed; for You are present in my heart; I feeel Your Presence; You have become my Ideal.'' In trouble, in pain, in poverty, in difficulty, friendless—in all these things (and no-one in the world can be without them), there He is beside you. The older you grow the more you feel that ''as long as I can be of use to the world, so long will the world want me. As soon as I can be of no service, of no use, then the world gets tired of me, it does not want me. The world is after that which is not myself. If I am wealthy the world is after my wealth, not me; if I am in a great position, the world is after me because of my position, not because of me.'' The world goes after false things. The world is false. The only safety from it is to have that ideal of God alive and constantly present.'' With that ideal I can be satisfied, and have rest and peace; not only on earth but even in the hereafter I shall be in the arms of the Divine!''

No-one can ever be so dear, so close,—children, husband, wife, friend—as this perfect Ideal. That Ideal will never fail. He will always be with you here and hereafter. You belong to him. From Him you came. To Him you return. By feeling the presence of that Ideal always in the heart, one feels every springing of every beauty, every impulse, every thought, every imagination, everything that comes out of oneself, everything one sees all round. One identifies it all with God in the end. To the person who creates the presence of God the whole life around becomes one single vision of the Immanence of God!

The Spiritual Hierarchy.

IN the Quran we read that God is the Light of the Heavens and of Earth. That explains to us that if the Creator is the Light of the heaven and of the earth, if the Creator Himself is Light, then the whole Creation is His Light also. Therefore if we wish to know the secret of the nature of the Heaven or of earth, we can learn it by studying the nature of light. There is nothing more attractive to our eyes than light, nothing more elevating. Every heart feels full of delight in the light of the sun.

The nature of light is to throw out its rays. The nature of the light of God is the same. If we study the rays minutely we shall see that from whatever angle we view it there is one central ray shooting forth with more intensity and with much more light than all the others. That means there is a central ray. Really speaking, the emblem of the cross has been a most ancient emblem, derived from a study of light. The first thing is the one central ray; it is the second glance that develops that ray into a horizontal line; the two lines now form the figure of a cross.

But light is everywhere. Whether electrical or gas or candle—it is the same. But light in its perfection (as in the sun) can be observed better than the small forms of light. Science has come to understand that the light of the sun is in all things. Religions have all understood this from the first. The Hindoos and Egyptians taught it. All over the East, worship of the sun was the first to come into existence. Only later were the sun-worshippers considered infidels, or heathens, or pagans. But as sun-worship is the natural religion, it is true that every religion can be traced to

it. The external light was the first thing that impressed the heart of man with the idea of God. No doubt the inner light helped, but even that is light! Therefore both the external and the inner light reveal the mystery of the source and secret of all religions.

We can see the same thing in different aspects of life. For instance, the falls and springs of water, the different channels all show one big central current of water, which scatters as it falls. It touches different rocks, spreads into many streams, and yet unites into one big stream.

In vegetable life we see the same. A tree with fruits and flowers and so many leaves and branches, has yet one central part of its being—its stem. The life of the stem is the life of the whole tree. It is not so much that the fruits and forms appear from the tree as that the stem is repeated over and over again. Every branch is a bough to smaller branches. That again shows how the light which we call life takes a main channel for its expression, spreads through different organs, the small channels or boughs.

We see it in man's form. There is the spine which is the stem. The breath runs through the centre of man's body, although the hands and legs and face and different organs have different directions. This central life is more important than any other part of man.

Then we see it in the life of people. Perhaps in every house there is some person whose sorrow means sorrow to the whole family, whose pleasure or happiness means a portion of pleasure or happiness to all the others. Perhaps a whole town moves at the strength and energy and enthusiasm and initiative of one person. A whole nation moves through "the man of the day." However many wise people there are, however intelligently and capable they may be there is still one person as the stem, through whom the whole activity is kept going. It has never been otherwise whether the age was aristocratic or democratic. Even if the age was

one of democracy a democrat has nevertheless been in the place of that stem, just as in the age of aristocracy an aristrocrat was in that place. No nation, no town, no city, no family exists, which has not that one soul on whom the happiness, unhappiness, degeneration or evolution of the whole depends.

Once, being asked whether one person's influence or understanding could be better than five persons', it was evident that the questioner thought that in these times one individual is no better than another. But the answer is, "five persons? that is very small! very small! There are some persons who know and understand more than five thousand!" In all ages we find musicians, poets, others of the greatest repute, who were seen by thousands of people who did not understand them. Millions of people may have adored them after they have gone. Poets, reformers, scientists have been who were considered "crazy" for thinking of something impossible. Yet they have been the greatest men in the world. Was not such a man equal to fifty-thousand people? Surely.

Even to-day we can see, in everyday life, how people argue and dispute without coming to a conclusion. Perhaps another comes and sets the whole thing right. The discord of thousands of people can be broken, and thousands of people could be united into one harmony by the presence of one person uniting them all.

Whether the democrat accepts it readily or not it does not matter. Even in a democratic land like Russia there is the influence of a leader just the sane. There is one man who is called "man." Whatever nation you go to there will be one person equal to thousands. This natural condition is the basis of ancient civilisation. It is the reverence and honour which is given to *age*—the old person had experience. However intelligent a person may be, it is the aged person's experience of life, the life he has seen, that tells.

Honour has been paid to *learning*. The learned

person was respected because he understood more. Honour was paid to *goodness*. If a person showed goodness to his family, proved to be honest and virtuous and right to his neighbour, they had a respect for him also, and made him a leader in the village or town. The social life was based on that appreciation of virtue, intelligence, experience. Hence came the custom of the king, rajah, chief, pasha, sultan—whatever name he received; he received it in virtue of his goodness, kindness, education, experience, manner. He became the leader of those who wished to become like him.

Those who believed in religion had faith in their church; they believed in their *tradition*. They had a regard for it. Others had the faith in their king. In the story of the dervish and the procession of the king (see p. 208) we see how easy it is—under the delusion of democracy—to go against all customs, education, authority, experience, age. Keep away from that delusion, and we find the real democracy; that which comes from showing a model to others, honouring and respecting that model ourselves. It is a crude spirit that says "I do not care for your education, your experience, your age; I don't care if you were thousands of years old!" That is the false democratic spirit. The true democratic spirit feels within itself that there is nothing one cannot be, and at the same time, appreciates, respects, and understands all that he sees in age, experience, goodness, righteousness, piety, virtue. To follow such a spirit means evolution; not to follow it means degeneration.

So we come to the idea of the religious *hierarchy*. It is natural for those who admire art to admire those who have painted beautiful pictures. Those who have a taste for music naturally admire the composers of the past, who have given their lives in the observation and contemplation of music and have benefited us by that deep pursuit of music and enabled us to start from the point at which we begin to-day, This inclination

is inherent, to admire, respect, and feel grateful to the masters of the past. We feel the desire to be near to them and get still closer.

It is the same in all directions of life. There is always the desire to get near to those lives who have helped humanity in music or science or reform or philosophy or religion. Whatever we know to-day is the discovery of thousands of years. No country or nation can say "we were the only discoverers of this or that." No, the discovery of the very least thing is the discovery of the whole of humanity. How should we understand language, were we not taught! Books, reading, civilisation, seeing life—all has helped so much that no-one can say "this particular person or nation has helped." The whole humanity shares in everything that we think new to-day.

In the case of the spiritual cults, we find how all the mystical and occult schools gratefully recognise the masters of the past who have given their experiences, sometimes by giving away their efforts, sometimes by giving away their happiness, sometimes leading a very hard and restricted life, sometimes renunciating all the happiness and wealth and possessions of this world, rejecting all temptations of life, going to live in the caves in the mountains, or forests.

Of course, every cult of mystics have used certain names. There are certain names in the cult of the Hindoos. In them they recognise certain masters. We find them also in the Semitic races, mentioned in the Bible, the Kabbalah, the Koran.

Naturally, the human mind has its limitations. If we had no limitations we should be perfect. Still it has always happened that man has recognised only those as masters who are found in his own tradition. He recognises the spirituality or greatness or blessing only of those whose names he can find in his own tradition. In the tradition of the Kabbalah there are the names of Abram and Moses; in the Christian tradition there is the name of Jesus Christ, and after Him those

of the saints; in the tradition of Islam come other names again—Mahomet and many Moslem saints. In India, Brahman, Vishnus, and Krishna. And as there was no convenient means of communication in ancient times, it was only natural that the tradition of one country should not be known to the others, and that the tradition of one country should become corrupted as it passed to the other. The names used in one nation thus came to be different from those in another. Braham, Abraham, Bahram (Persia) are all near. If you tell some persons that one name is really the same as another, they will not accept it because they do not wish to think another tradition is the same. Those of his own tradition are "the only ones."

There is no blame in this, seeing the tendency in man to revere, appreciate, be grateful and link himself up to their piety, virtue, goodness, spirituality, or power. It does not matter as long as the greater thing is recognised. If he does not recognise it now, he will perhaps do so later. It is just the same as that no particular school or group of scientists has been the only help. When we perceive the depths, we see that every person in this world has been helped to evolution and has helped each other. When we look deeply into life we see how a person is illuminated from another, how one learns from another. Whatever the name of the teacher, there is still the one stem of life and light. As long as the tree of this manifestation exists, the stem will exist. The names are all names of one current of life and light that runs through the tree. The one spirit of life is given different names, the sacred names, and we more easily recognise the current by the particular name to which we are accustomed. So far we are right, but the mistake we make (and it is to our loss) is to ignore or deny the same truth because it is given to us in another form and in another name. We limit it. We say the truth was only in that period when such and such teachers came to the world, and

that after that the truth was stopped. But the spirit of illumination can never stop as long as life goes on. Illumination has been continued from the first to the last, and will always be continued until the manifestation stops; so long will the spirit of illumination continue to spread out its rays.

We accept some forms, and ignore others. It is the natural tendency of mankind. It is this that accounts for so many religions. Even if a person cannot see things in that light, he can at least be tolerant of other person's religions. He can respect the religion because he sees others respect it, even if he himself has not respect for its teacher. After all, "spiritualism" means "respect," "advancement." Man shows his evolution according to his respect, his consideration, his thoughtfulness. If we could only develop that faculty in our mind, it would not matter not believing or recognising the spirit of guidance shown in the different forms of humanity. If we held our own teacher or master in the greatest esteem it would do a great deal of spiritual good. All the wars of the ancient times and all the inharmony of the world is usually caused by religious differences, and the differences are caused by man's failing to underst and hat religion is one, truth is one, God is one.—How *can* there be two religions?

The tendency to regard highly the teachers who have passed is natural because when a person has passed he is unapproachable, and the goodness of his spirit can be recognised. When the spirit is in physical form, it becomes difficult to recognise spirituality in him, and give him the same esteem as to one who has passed. Sages and teachers in all ages have usually been recognised after they have passed. In their lifetime they were neglected and even received opposition.

The mystic understands that the illuminated souls, the guiding souls, are on earth too. They are not only in the past; they are here now also. Were there none on the earth now, how could the illumination be

continued? It is the present that is the best, not the past. What is present to-day, will be the past to-morrow. So the mystic does not lose the opportunity of recognising the spirit in the present as well as in the past.

The Sufis use such terms as wali, nabi, insaan, adam, kutub. But names do not matter. The grades are necessary grades. One person's influence may be in a village, another in a county, another in the whole country.

What is the sign of such souls? Of course in the East it is believed that some persons bring good luck. We say somebody, or some child in the house, has brought good luck, this guest or this friend has brought good luck. The good luck may be brought to one person, or it may be to ten, or fifty in one's life. That shows there is some influence, and we can recognise it as benefit, good, harmony, to five, ten, a hundred, a multitude. The soul is as great as the circle of its influence.

Human beings are all in the limited form—so tall, so short—the soul is much wider. One person's influence may hold a thousand people. There is a saying in the Najuti language: "it is possible that the world may be saved by the virtue of one; it is possible by the sin of one the whole ship may sink."

We see that also in practical life. An incapable foreman in a factory will bring nothing but disappointment; an inefficient manager in an office or shop will bring nothing but bad luck. One person's influence, capability, knowledge, enthusiasm, initiative, strength of mind, will-power, perhaps is far greater than a thousand peoples'. When we look at it from a spiritual point of view there is one person's soul emitting a blessing and goodness to thousands.

There are two forms of this: (1) that there may be a soul in a very humble guise, that nobody can think that that soul could possibly be at all spiritual or pious or good; it may be a soul working as a servant, one

who scrubs the floor—there is such a great influence of goodness and light and blessing in that soul, that unconsciously wherever it goes it takes some blessing, some goodness, light, harmony, joy, peace.

In the East, this has been kept as a belief until today. Therefore a child is taught to be careful not to offend anybody, however humble or weak he seems. We do not know what is hid in his humbleness or weakness. He may be uneducated, or possess no money, position or sign of high birth or anything bringing notice in the eyes of the world, and yet a beautiful soul is hidden there like a beautiful gem lying for thousands of years under a rock until someone finds it and puts it in a crown to be worn by a king, where everybody sees it.

A person who welcomes everybody and sees the gift of virtue in everybody, has faithfulnesss and consideration to everybody—his soul develops so that in time others perceive his light. Wherever the light is, it can be perceived.

(2) It is not necessary for the jewel to be so hidden. Sometimes it is not. It is not hidden where there is a work in life that a soul has to do. There may be a work to give a divine message or to uphold a country or nation that is going into degeneration. He may have to guide it through its difficulty, keep its harmony and peace.

As in the days of Noah, so there may be a need of a warning. (Mt: 24: 37). That soul comes to give it. The light that is mostly hidden now comes forward to bring something to light that is in the depth of life. Once it would be that such a soul was called a prophet or teacher, or godhead or incarnation. Others claimed to be prophets or healers or warners. But in the time of man's maturity, the whole world's maturity, such things are not so named, and yet the work is needed. The personality has been the sign, the evidence; the message has been the sign, the evidence of its truth or falseness. There was a time when

the world was not capable of seeing. Humanity was not raised enough to recognise the message. Hence the claim of prophecy had to be made. But now the world can recognise sooner or later what is right and what is wrong. The warner, the master, the messenger of to-day will not claim; he will only work. He will leave his work to prove for itself whether it is true or false.

Those who view life mystically, consider not merely that they are one with the teachers of this tradition or that (of the past), but they consider that in every soul there is a spark of that teacher. No soul is without the light of that spiritual teacher. Therefore they have regard and respect not only for the spiritual hierarchy, but also for the spark of that light which has made a spiritual hierarchy in every soul. So they regard with respect and reverence every human being in the world.

The whole vision of life, the whole manifestation becomes one single evidence of the sublimity of God.

Epilogue.

I HAVE risen with the crest of the wave, and I have sunk into its deepest trough. I have been at the mountain-top and I have dwelt in the recesses of the valleys. Yet wherever I am, there art Thou also.

I have travelled from sphere to sphere, beholding all things Thou hast made, and yet I have not moved from where I stand. For at all times, and in all places, Thou also dost abide and illuminate with Thy light, kissing Thy lovers with the vision of eternal bliss!

I have watched Thy stones hurled from Thy sling, and seen how some of them strike the appointed goal. So do Thy lovers reach Thee, never to be parted again.

Then I returned to the garden, the garden of Inayat, and I watched the zephyr gently blowing over the flowers, nodding just this, then that, and carrying their separate perfumes in its path—some only a little way, others further, and others right out of the garden into the sleeping world outside.

The sighing of the breeze ceased awhile, and so I closed the gate of the garden, and lingered without its high walls, lest by my absence from that spot the passers-by perchance might not notice either the perfumes, or the garden whence they came.

But verily the garden, the gardener, and the perfumes are all one!

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(A summary of the essential teachings in this volume, with some cross-references to other works by Inayat Khan.)

Abbreviations: D=Diwan; H=Hindustani Lyrics; S=Songs of India.

The Roman numeral refers to the number of the poem, the Arabic numeral refers to the number of the verse.—All other numbers are to the pages of the present volume.

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